Emancipation Writ Large: Toward an Ecocentric Green Political Theory

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This thesis contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other higher degree or graduate diploma in any tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except when due reference is made in this thesis.

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Abstract

The central objective of this inquiry is to outline an ecocentric Green political theory in the course of a critical evaluation of the principal ideas that form the current melting pot of Green political thought. In Part I, I set the stage for this inquiry by providing a general overview of the emergence and development of ecopolitical thought over the last three decades in order to locate and distinguish Green political theory from other kinds of ecopolitical thought (i.e., Green political theory is seen as a subset of ecopolitical thought in general). I identify three major themes in the development of ecopolitical thought over the last three decades - a participatory theme, a survivalist theme, and an emancipatory theme. I argue that whereas other kinds of ecopolitical thought have tended to emphasize the themes of democratic participation and/or human survival, Green political theory can be characterized by its concern to reconcile these themes through the more encompassing theme of emancipation. I then divide Green or emancipatory ecopolitical theory into an anthropocentric and an ecocentric stream. The first stream is principally concerned with developing an ecologically safe and sustainable society that offers new opportunities for human emancipation and fulfilment. The second stream pursues these same goals within the context of a broader concept of emancipation that also respects the freedom of the nonhuman world to unfold in its many diverse ways. I argue that it is this latter ecocentric stream that offers the most comprehensive and promising framework for social and ecological emancipation.

In the remainder of Part I, I articulate and defend an ecocentric philosophical perspective in the course of a discussion of some of the central debates and arguments that have been advanced in the emerging domain of environmental philosophy. I also show how the anthropocentric/ecocentric cleavage may be used to shed light on the normative debates that are currently taking place within the international Green movement.

In Part II, I articulate, critically examine, and evaluate the principal emancipatory (i.e., Green) currents of ecopolitical thought. These currents are identified under the broad, generic names of orthodox eco-Marxism, humanist eco-Marxism (including Critical Theory), democratic ecosocialism, ecoanarchism, and ecofeminism (liberal and conservative responses to the ecological crisis are dealt with summarily in Chapter 1). My principal concern is to determine the extent to which these new syntheses of ecological and political thought are anthropocentric or ecocentric, and to defend an ecocentric orientation. I also assess the internal theoretical coherence of each synthesis, critically examine theoretical claims concerning the relationship between social domination and the domination of the nonhuman world, and draw out the political priorities that flow from these theoretical claims.

I conclude that, in terms of long term vision and general orientation, ecofeminism and ecoanarchism (excepting, to some extent, social ecology) are the most ecocentric of the Green theories examined whereas orthodox eco-Marxism, humanist eco-Marxism (including Critical Theory), and democratic ecosocialism are anthropocentric (albeit in decreasing degrees respectively). Notwithstanding this finding, I argue that the anti-statist political framework defended by ecoanarchism (and implicitly supported by ecofeminism) is neither the only nor the most appropriate political framework for the realization of ecocentric goals in the foreseeable future in view of the urgency of the ecological crisis and the need for international eco-diplomacy. Instead I argue that the democratic ecosocialist case for the retention of a democratic state as an "enabling institution" to promote social justice and ecological integrity is more likely, in practice, to realize ecocentric goals than the ecoanarchist case - notwithstanding the fact that democratic ecosocialism has so far been defended only on anthropocentric grounds. I conclude that a much revised version of democratic ecosocialism that rests on ecocentric foundations provides the most comprehensive and defensible political framework for emancipation writ large. However, the success of this framework will depend on the cultivation of an

appropriate ecocentric emancipatory culture and in this respect ecoanarchism and ecofeminism will have a vital and continuing role to play.

Acknowledgements

When I began planning this inquiry in 1985, Green politics was a relatively new, relatively undeveloped, and reasonably manageable field of inquiry. By 1990 the literature on Green politics had expanded rapidly - a development that reflects the increasing international public concern over environmental issues and the growing international success of Green political parties during the latter half of the 1980s. I would not have been able to keep up to date with this burgeoning Green literature were it not for my Australian and international colleagues. I am also grateful to many of these same colleagues for their assistance, feedback, and support during the writing of this thesis.

First and foremost, I would like to extend a very special thank you to Warwick Fox for inspiration, many long and stimulating discussions, detailed and invaluable critical feedback, general encouragement, and wholehearted support in more ways than I could possibly enumerate. I would also like to extend a special thanks to Peter Hay for his supervision, encouragement, feedback, and proof reading and to John Todd, Nita Saunders, David Sommerville, and the rest of the staff and students at the Centre for Environmental Studies for providing such a friendly and supportive environment in which to research.

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I am also grateful to the Australian federal government for financial assistance in the form of a Commonwealth Postgraduate Research Scholarship, which enabled me to undertake this research on a full-time basis.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my parents for their constant love and support for as long as I can remember.

I have published a number of papers during the course of pursuing my research for this thesis (see the Bibliography). Although the thesis is informed by these papers, it nonetheless consists of wholly new work with the exception of the following: part of my discussion of the ecophilosophical ideas of Murray Bookchin in Chapter 7 draws on a longer published article entitled "Divining Evolution: The Ecological Ethics of Murray Bookchin," Environmental Ethics 11 (1989): 99-116, and a substantial part of Chapter 5 will be appearing shortly in a slightly revised form as "Habermas and Green Political Theory: Two Roads Diverging," in Theory and Society 19 (1990).

The style of this thesis generally follows the University of Chicago's Manual of Style (Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 4th ed. [Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1973]). On matters of grammar, I followed Bill Bryson, The Penguin Dictionary of Troublesome Words (Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1984), who points out, for example, that it is not ungrammatical to split an infinitive (p. 134) or to end a sentence with a preposition (p. 118).

Table of Contents

Prologue

> Our ecologic crisis is the product of an emerging, entirely novel, democratic culture. The issue is whether a democratized world can survive its own implications. Presumably we cannot unless we rethink our axioms.
>
> Lynn White, Jr.[1]

I have undertaken the present inquiry in the belief that mainstream political philosophy is too narrowly focused to deal with the ubiquity and magnitude of the environmental crisis. My main concern is therefore to establish a more encompassing political framework that takes full cognizance of the environmental crisis and, in particular, of the myriad nonhuman life-forms with which we share our evolutionary odyssey.

The challenging and distinctive feature of what I shall identify as the ecocentric stream in Green political theory is that it has sought to widen the ambit of political inquiry to include the question of our relationship to, and impact upon, the nonhuman world. Questions of this kind have rarely been aired explicitly by political (as distinct from environmental) philosophers, let alone given any prominence. In the main, political philosophers have confined their attention to social questions and affairs of state, that is, inter-human relations rather than human-nonhuman relations. This is not to say that political philosophers have not held biological and cosmological views that have exerted an influence on their political vision. Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Karl Marx, to name three influential political thinkers from classical, medieval, and modern times, each held quite distinct views on the relationship of humans to the nonhuman world that exerted a powerful sway on their respective political philosophies. Nor are these thinkers exceptional. Every political world-view incorporates certain assumptions bearing on the relationship of humans to the rest of nature. The main point I wish to emphasize, however, is that in these and

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1. Lynn White, Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis, Science 155 (1967): 1203-7 at p. 1204.

most other cases of political theorizing the nonhuman world has generally been accorded the status of a background or stage upon which the human drama unfolds. Invariably, this background has been considered relevant only insofar as it helps us to see what is special about humans vis-a-vis the nonhuman world or only insofar as it is instrumentally valuable to human actors, whether as a material resource or as some other means to human self-realization. Invariably, too, these background assumptions concerning the relationship between the human and nonhuman worlds are opaque and uncontroversial since they usually form part of the stock assumptions of the Age. Yet it is surprising how the fragments of certain cultural and political assumptions characteristic of one particular Age can persist in subsequent times even when the foundations upon which these assumptions originally rested have been supplanted or seriously challenged by, say, new scientific discoveries or new philosophical investigations. As Lynn White has observed:

> Despite Copernicus, all the cosmos rotates around our little globe. Despite Darwin, we are <u>not</u>, in our hearts, part of the natural process. We are superior to nature, contemptuous of it, willing to use it for our slightest whim.[2]

More generally, Alvin Gouldner has noted how "old background assumptions" - the "inherited intellectual 'capital' with which a theorist is endowed" - may come to operate in new conditions and act as boundaries that confine and inhibit the further development of a particular theoretical enterprise.[3] It is part of the burden of this inquiry to uncover and challenge some of the inherited anthropocentric intellectual capital that remains embedded in the stock assumptions of modern political theory and to show how it has inhibited a deeper appreciation of our environmental ills and perpetuated or at least legitimated (albeit often unwittingly) the very processes of environmental destruction.

This critique of the anthropocentric assumptions of Western political thought will prepare the way for the development of a more encompassing political framework with which to approach social and ecological problems. This alternative

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2. Ibid., p. 1206.

3. Alvin Gouldner, <u>The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology</u> (London: Heinemann, 1973), p. 34.

framework, which rests on an ecocentric or ecology-centred philosophical perspective, will emerge in the course of a critical evaluation of the principal new ideas that make up the contemporary melting pot of Green political thought.

Whether the ecocentric political theory defended in this inquiry is understood as breaking new ground or simply re-working familiar themes in political theory ultimately depends on the criterion that is used to distinguish one political theory from another. From the perspective of the familiar left/right spectrum of political thought, the ecocentric political theory defended in this inquiry might be seen as just another permutation, albeit a significant revision and enlargement, of democratic socialism or social democracy. Viewed in the light of the anthropocentric and cornucopian assumptions of post-Enlightenment political thought, however, such an ecocentric political theory may be seen as a genuinely new constellation of political ideas.

Part I

Staking Out the Green Terrain

Chapter 1

The Development of Modern Ecopolitical Thought: From Participation and Survival to Emancipation

Introduction

In this chapter I argue that the development of political thought in the last three decades in response to the environmental crisis and popular environmental concern can be divided into three broad themes - "participation," "survival," and "emancipation." To some extent, these three themes may be seen as roughly characterizing the general ecopolitical preoccupation of the last three decades respectively, although this temporal association is a loose one only and should not be pressed too far (i.e., "later" ecopolitical themes are discernible in earlier periods just as "earlier" themes are discernible in subsequent periods). Indeed, I intend to show that the last three decades have seen a general broadening of ecopolitical dialogue as a result of the gradual interpenetration of these themes or phases of inquiry. That is, the participatory, survivalist, and emancipatory phases may be seen as representing the thesis, anti-thesis, and higher synthesis respectively in the ecopolitical dialogue of the last three decades. It is this third, emancipatory phase of ecopolitical thought that I intend to articulate and critically examine in this inquiry.

For the purposes of this inquiry, the phrases "Green political theory" and "emancipatory ecopolitical theory" will be used interchangeably. Of course, the label "Green" is an extraordinarily elastic one that has been applied to, or appropriated by, all manner of environmental and ecopolitical positions. My equation of Green political theory with what I identify as emancipatory ecopolitical theory is, however, an attempt to clarify and delineate what I take to be the essential (and most promising) contours of Green political discourse. My tripartite characterization of ecopolitical thought is, then, the means I use to locate and distinguish Green political

theory (i.e., emancipatory ecopolitical theory) from other kinds of ecopolitical approaches (i.e., participatory and survivalist ecopolitical theory).

Having distinguished emancipatory ecopolitical thought from other kinds of ecopolitical approaches, I further subdivide this third phase of inquiry into two streams - an anthropocentric stream and an ecocentric stream. I will be arguing throughout this inquiry that it is the ecocentric stream of emancipatory ecopolitical thought that provides the most comprehensive and promising theoretical framework with which to address the ecological and social crises of the late 20th century.

The Environmental Problematic as a Crisis of Participation

The 1960s marked the beginning of widespread public concern over environmental degradation in the developed countries of the West. (The birth of the modern environmental movement is typically associated with the publication of Rachel Carson's international best seller Silent Spring in 1962.[1] The U. S. Earth Day [22 April 1970] is often regarded as the major landmark for the "take off" - as distinct from the birth - of popular environmental concern in the West.[2]) Agitation emerged and persisted in the form of grassroots protests and lobbying over local, national, and international issues (e.g., pesticides, nuclear power plants, toxic waste dumps, large scale industrial developments, and pollution) so that in the space of roughly a decade an "environmental crisis" was officially recognized as a matter of local, national, and

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1. Rachel Carson, Silent Spring (New York: Fawcett Crest Books, 1962; reprint ed., Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1970). This book eloquently documented the destruction of wildlife and the disruptions caused to ecological cycles by the indiscriminate use of pesticides. It gave rise to an international public outcry and raised popular awareness of environmental degradation. As one commentator put it: "[Silent Spring] ... was exceptional in its ability to combine a grim warning about pesticide poisoning with a text that celebrated the living world." See Ralph H. Lutts, "Chemical Fallout: Rachel Carson's Silent Spring, Radioactive Fallout, and the Environmental Movement," Environmental Review 9 (1985): 211-25 at p. 211.

2. Indeed, Neil Evernden argues that "the environmental movement was conceived with the Carson book, but it had a gestation of eight years before its symbolic birth on Earth Day (April 22, 1970)." See Neil Evernden, "The Environmentalist's Dilemma," in The Paradox of Environmentalism, Symposium Proceedings, ed. by Neil Evernden (Downsview, Ontario: Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, 1984), pp. 7-17 at p. 8.

international concern.[3] In addition to the Earth Day celebrations in 1970, the emergence of a panoply of new environmental laws in Western countries in the late 1960s and early 1970s and the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment at Stockholm in 1972 represent significant landmarks of national and international recognition of environmental problems.

Yet much of this official recognition, such as new environmental legislation, also helped to define and contain environmental problems as essentially matters of poor planning rather than as indicators that the cornucopian assumptions of the post-World War II growth consensus might need to be revised. In particular, the notion that there might be ecological limits to economic growth that could not be overcome by human technological ingenuity and better planning was not seriously entertained until after the much publicized "limits to growth" debate of the early 1970s (more on these debates below). As John Rodman observed in the context of the United States, environmental problems were originally perceived in the 1960s as a "crisis of participation" whereby excluded groups sought to ensure a more equitable distribution of environmental "goods" (e.g., urban amenity) and "bads" (e.g., pollution).[4] This is not surprising given that the early wave of environmental activism was generally seen as but a facet of the civil rights movement in its concern for democratic participation in societal decision-making, in this case, land and resource usage. The growth in public concern over environmental problems was thus widely interpreted as being primarily concerned with participatory and distributional issues, that is, issues concerning "who decides" and "who gets what, when, and how." The upshot was that by the 1970s environmental problems were, as Rodman has put it:

> ... domesticated by mainstream political science, reduced to the study of pollution control and environmental interest groups and eventually absorbed within the framework of "the policy process" and the "politics of getting."[5]

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3. For a general overview, see John McCormick, The Global Environmental Movement: Reclaiming Paradise (London: Belhaven Press, 1989), Chapter 3 (The Environmental Revolution [1962-1970]).

4. John Rodman, "Paradigm Change in Political Science: An Ecological Perspective," American Behavioral Scientist 24 (1980): 49-78 at p. 65.

This kind of characterization of the problem was widely shared by both policy makers and political theorists. This is not to say that new critiques, sensibilities, and theoretical paths did not emerge in the 1960s and early 1970s. Rachel Carson's Silent Spring, Murray Bookchin's Our Synthetic Environment, and, to a lesser extent, Charles Reich's prophetically titled The Greening of America represent three important landmarks in the emergence of a new sensibility that celebrated the living world and was deeply critical of dominant Western attitudes toward the nonhuman world.[6] These contributions, however, were exceptions. By and large, there were few major theoretical innovations in social and political thought in the 1960s that arose specifically from a consideration of the environmental crisis. This tendency to treat environmental protest as an aspect of the wider pursuit of distributive justice and democratic planning was especially marked among socialist, social democratic, and liberal welfare theorists - a tendency that has continued through to the 1980s. Perhaps the exemplar of this kind of social democratic analysis is Hugh Stretton's award winning book Capitalism, Socialism and the Environment, which opens with the unequivocal declaration that:

> This book is about the distribution of environmental goods: the shares that go to rich and poor in the developed democracies of Europe, North America, Japan and Australasia.[7]

Although distributional questions remain crucial questions in any ecopolitical inquiry, I will be arguing that to circumscribe the problem in this way serves to reinforce rather than challenge the prevailing instrumental orientation toward the environment as essentially a resource for humans (albeit a resource to be utilized more efficiently and equitably).

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5. Ibid. For an overview of environmental policy studies in the United States, see Dean Mann, "Environmental Policy Studies," Policy Studies Journal 1 (1972): 17-22.

6. Murray Bookchin [pseud. Lewis Herber], Our Synthetic Environment (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962) and Charles Reich, The Greening of America (Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1971).

7. Hugh Stretton, Capitalism, Socialism and the Environment (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 1.

By virtue of the radical democratic and participatory nature of environmental protest in the 1960s, political commentators tended to regard it as an adjunct of the New Left. Yet even this association was soon to come under challenge as a rearguard action developed against environmentalism by socialist and liberal welfare theorists. The discovery of the socially regressive consequences of some environmental reforms (e.g., the costs of pollution abatement being passed on as higher prices and unemployment resulting from the closing down of polluting industries) soon gave rise to the now familiar accusation that environmental protest was an elitist, middle class phenomenon that threatened the hard won material gains and jobs of the urban working class.[8] Such social conflicts provide a significant indication of the gradual re-alignment of political cleavages that has been taking place in the industrially developed countries of the West between, on the one hand, the so-called New Class (or New Middle Class) that furnishes the core activists of the environmental movement, and, on the other hand, the two traditional classes of industrial society, namely, the owners/controllers of capital and the working class.[9] The growing tension that developed between the demand for environmental reform, on the one hand, and redistributive justice and economic security, on the other hand, has remained an enduring and essential theme of ecopolitical discussion. These developments have also encouraged the articulation of a range of new political cleavages (such as materialist/post-materialist, technocentric/ecocentric) that cut across the traditional left/right divide.[10]

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8. For an influential critique of this kind, see Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "A Critique of Political Ecology," New Left Review 84 (1974): 3-31. For a reply, see Robyn Eckersley, "The Environment Movement as Middle Class Elitism: A Critical Analysis," Regional Journal of Social Issues 18 (1986): 24-36.

9. See, for example, Ronald Inglehart, The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977) and Ronald Inglehart, "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," The American Political Science Review 75 (1981): 880-900. For a critical evaluation of the major sociological explanations (including Inglehart's) put forward to account for the predominant New Class composition of the ecology movement and broader Green movement, see Robyn Eckersley, "Green Politics and the New Class: Selfishness or Virtue?" Political Studies 37 (1989): 205-23.

10. See, for example, Inglehart, The Silent Revolution and Timothy O'Riordan, Environmentalism, 2nd ed. (London: Pion, 1981). These and other similar distinctions are discussed below.

The 1960s and early 1970s were also a time of theoretical stock-taking and revision for socialist theory - a revision spearheaded by the rise of the New Left. In particular, Herbert Marcuse's One Dimensional Man and the essays collected in Jurgen Habermas's Toward a Rational Society played an influential role in tracing many of the problems of industrial society - including its environmental dislocations - to an instrumental or technocratic rationality that had overreached itself.[11] This contributed to the widening of the New Left's agenda to include questions of life-style, technology, and the exploitation of nature. The ready absorption of these ideas by the counterculture and "back-to-nature" movements of the 1960s was defended eloquently by political theorists and cultural historians such as Murray Bookchin, Theodore Roszak, and Charles Reich.[12] Many of the issues raised by these writers, such as the importance of consciousness change and alternative world-views, remain significant currents in modern emancipatory/Green theorizing.

Yet, with the exception of the work of Roszak and to some extent Marcuse and Bookchin, none of these early theoretical developments mounted a serious challenge to anthropocentrism or argued for a new humility and compassion in our dealings with the nonhuman world.[13] Rather, the growing concern for environmental quality was incorporated into the New Left's agenda for greater individual and community autonomy and control. After all, the overriding revolutionary goal of the New Left, as George Katsiaficas describes it in his comprehensive international study, was "the decentralization and self-management of power and resources."[14]

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11. Herbert Marcuse, One Dimensional Man (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964; reprint ed. London: Abacus, 1972) and Jurgen Habermas, Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science, and Politics, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1971).

12. See, for example, Bookchin [pseud. Lewis Herber], Our Synthetic Environment; Bookchin, Post-Scarcity Anarchism (Berkeley: Ramparts Press, 1971); Theodore Roszak, The Making of a Counterculture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and its Youthful Opposition (London: Faber, 1970, 1973); Roszak, Where the Wasteland Ends: Politics and Transcendence in Postindustrial Society (New York: Doubleday, 1972; reprint ed., London: Faber and Faber, 1973); and Reich, The Greening of America.

13. Marcuse is discussed in Chapter 5 and Bookchin and Roszak are discussed in Chapter 7.

To most New Left thinkers, then, questions concerning humanity's power vis-a-vis the rest of nature were dealt with in terms of who exercised such power and on whose behalf. These were (and still are) of course crucial questions, as I have already noted, yet they remained embedded in an essentially anthropocentric framework and were firmly wedded to the "participatory" ethos of the times. As I show in Chapter 5, even the innovative attacks on the ideology of "scientism" and instrumental rationality waged by Critical Theorists such as Marcuse and Habermas only partially transcended this framework (enough, however, for me to identify these theorists as emancipatory ecopolitical theorists, albeit in the anthropocentric rather than ecocentric stream). Their overriding concern was to open up improved channels of communication in order to facilitate the achievement of a democratic consensus that would direct the development and use of technology toward more human liberatory ends. This was also the major thrust of William Leiss's critique of "the domination of nature."[15] Although these critiques were innovating and provocative and remain fruitful themes that have been incorporated into emancipatory ecopolitical thought, their overriding objective was the liberation of "inner" rather than "outer" nature (i.e., human instincts or human communication rather than the nonhuman community). As I show in Chapter 5, Critical Theory's objection to the domination of nature ultimately rests on the human-centred argument that it has led to the domination of people.

This brief introductory outline and critique of the participatory theme in ecopolitical thought should not be interpreted as a rejection of the early theoretical contribution of the New Left. Questions concerning citizen participation, self-management, and distributive justice remain central issues in ecopolitical discussions and form a basic plank in grassroots environmental protest and in the platforms of the international Green movement that has been gradually gathering momentum since the late 1970s. These themes are reflected, for example, in two of the so-called "four

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14. George Katsiaficas, The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968 (Boston, Massachusetts: South End Press, 1987), p. 5.

15. See William Leiss, The Domination of Nature (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974).

pillars" upon which the platforms of most Green parties rest, namely, grassroots democracy and social justice.[16] Yet these are not the distinguishing characteristics of the ecocentric Green political thought that will be defended in this inquiry (although they form an essential part of this body of thought). The "discovery" of "ecological interconnectedness" - which was brought to public attention in the early 1960s with the publication of Rachel Carson's Silent Spring but did not gather momentum until the late 1970s and early 1980s - was to set in train significant theoretical innovations the political repercussions of which are only beginning to be worked out in any degree of detail. As we shall see, the most significant of these has been the attempt by ecologically oriented theorists to revise and incorporate the principles of individual and community autonomy into a broader, earth-centred theoretical matrix.

The Environmental Problematic as a Crisis of Survival

The "crisis of survival" theme in ecopolitics rose to prominence in the early 1970s following the publication of the Club of Rome's The Limits to Growth and the Ecologist magazine's Blueprint for Survival.[17] Although evidence of widespread environmental deterioration had been steadily accumulating since the 1950s, the sensational and widely publicized findings of these two reports posed a considerable challenge to the sanguine belief that we could continue with business and politics as usual.[18] The mounting evidence of environmental degradation stemming from the

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16. The other two pillars are ecology and non-violence. See, for example, Die Grunen, Programme of the German Green Party (London: Heretic Books, 1983), pp. 7-9.

17. Donella H. Meadows, Dennis L. Meadows, Jorgen Randers, and William W. Behrens III., The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind (New York: Universe Books, 1972) and Edward Goldsmith et al., Blueprint for Survival (Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1972).

18. Earlier warnings can be found in Harrison Brown, The Challenge of Man's Future (New York: Viking, 1954); Bookchin, Our Synthetic Environment (1962); Carson, Silent Spring (1962); Stuart L. Udall, The Quiet Crisis (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1963); and Paul Ehrlich, The Population Bomb (New York: Ballantine Books, 1970; revised ed., London: Pan/Ballantine, 1972). Other warnings in the early 1970s include Paul Ehrlich and Anne Ehrlich, Population, Resources, Environment (San Francisco: Freeman, 1970); Richard A. Falk, The Endangered Planet (New

exponential growth in resource consumption and human population was shown to pose very real threats to the earth's biological support systems. Although there were important differences between the two reports they both shared the same general message. That is, the environmental crisis amounted to much more than a crisis in participation; what was at stake was the very survival of humanity.[19] The metaphor of our planet as "spaceship earth" - which had become popular following the circulation of images of the "whole earth" taken from outer space by NASA - was widely employed to emphasize a new appreciation of the fragility and finiteness of the earth as an "oasis in the desert of infinite space."[20] This marked the emergence of a new appreciation of the global dimensions of environmental degradation and the common fate of humanity, although some of the ecopolitical solutions offered in the wake of the new awareness of global environmental degradation and resource scarcity (such as Garrett Hardin's "life-boat ethics," discussed below) were not always "brotherly."

Not surprisingly, the dire projections of The Limits to Growth and Blueprint for Survival (which carried the endorsement of many eminent British scientists) had a notable impact on the world's media and prompted calls for a swift and multifaceted response from national governments. (The ensuing debate was intensified by the 1973-74 oil crisis, which came as a timely reminder of the heavy oil dependence and hence vulnerability of industrialized countries.) Indeed, The Ecologist's detailed

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York: Vintage, 1971); and Barry Commoner, The Closing Circle: Nature, Man and Technology (New York: Bantam, 1972).

19. The Ecologist magazine's "blueprint" proposed a quite radical and specific set of measures to deal with the crisis and advocated the need for a decentralized, steady state society. This went much further than the Club of Rome's call for more research and for concerted national and international action to attain a state of "global equilibrium." (See the commentary by the Executive Committee of the Club of Rome, in Meadows et al., The Limits to Growth, pp. 185-97.) Robert Golub and Joe Townsend have argued that the success of the Club of Rome's report may be partly accounted for by the fact that it actually suited business interests and governments at the time (i.e., they were seeking greater international economic controls to smooth out the growing instability of the world's economy brought about by the spread of multinational companies.) See Golub and Townsend, "Malthus, Multinationals, and the Club of Rome," Social Studies of Science 7 (1977): 201-22.

20. Joseph Campbell, Myths to Live By (New York: Bantam, 1973), quoted by Yaakov Jerome Garb in "The Use and Misuse of the Whole Earth Image," Whole Earth Review, March 1985, pp. 18-25 at p. 18.

solution outlined in Blueprint for Survival provided the impetus for the formation in 1973 of Europe's first Green party - the British People's Party - which later became the Ecology Party in 1975 and the British Green Party in September 1985. This party adopted The Ecologist's radical "blueprint" as its basic theoretical statement.[21] Blueprint for Survival has proved to be a landmark publication in Green politics in foreshadowing many of the goals and policies that are found in the platforms of the various Green parties that formed in the late 1970s and 1980s.

In concentrating mainly on the physical limits to growth, however, the M.I.T. study commissioned by the Club of Rome spawned a plethora of counterarguments to the effect that the problems were susceptible to "technological fix" and pricing solutions that would alleviate the "negative externalities" of economic growth without the need for any fundamental changes in political values or the pattern and scale of economic activity. Moreover, the particular projections of the M.I.T. team were criticized for containing methodological flaws and resting on unduly pessimistic assumptions.[22]

Yet the methodological problems that have been discovered in The Limits to Growth have not, by and large, seriously detracted from its essential message. The Club of Rome's 1974 updated survey (prepared in response to criticisms of its 1972

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21. The aims of the British party were "to create a self-reliant, community based way of life within the framework of a stable economy and a just, democratic society, so that people may live in harmony with each other and the rest of the natural environment by acknowledging and adapting to the limitations of the earth's finite resources." See Alistair McCulloch, "The Ecology Party and Constituency Politics: The Anatomy of a Grassroots Party," Paper presented to the Annual Conference of the Political Studies Association, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, April 1983. The quotation is taken from an Ecology Party pamphlet, The Politics of Ecology (London: n.p., 1979), p. 4. For a more recent discussion of the changing fortunes of this party, see Jonathon Porritt and David Winner, The Coming of the Greens (London: Fontana, 1988), pp. 60-62 and 76-78.

22. For a methodological critique, see H. S. D. Cole, C. Freeman, M. Jahoda and K. L. R. Pavitt, Thinking About the Future: A Critique of the Limits to Growth (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973). For an optimistic alternative, see Herman Kahn, William Brown, and Leon Martel, The Next 200 Years (London: Associated Business Programmes, 1976; London: Abacus, 1978). For a general discussion of the debate, see John Gribbon, Future Worlds (London: Abacus, 1979), Chapter 1 ("Boom or Gloom? The Great Debate").

report) concluded, in a slightly more optimistic tone, that growth was possible provided it was ecologically benign:

> For the first time in man's life on earth, he is being asked to refrain from doing what he can do; he is being asked to restrain his economic and technical advancement, or at least to direct it differently from before; he is being asked by all future generations of the earth to share his good fortune with the unfortunate - not in a spirit of charity, but in a spirit of survival.[23]

Indeed, many of those who have been most critical of this body of so-called "doomsday literature" have acknowledged that the crisis is real and that far-reaching changes in both our values and institutions are required if ecological and social catastrophe is to be averted.[24] Moreover, the basic message of The Limits to Growth and Blueprint for Survival has been reinforced by later, more refined studies of global trends in population growth, resource consumption, and ecological deterioration. For example, the major study of the world's environmental problems commissioned by President Carter in The Global 2000 Report to the President of the U.S. summarized its findings as follows:

> If present trends continue, the world in 2000 will be more crowded, more polluted, less stable ecologically, and more vulnerable to disruption than the world we live in now. Serious stresses involving population, resources, and environment are clearly visible ahead. Despite greater material output, the world's people will be poorer in many ways than they are today.[25]

The annual State of the World reports, published by the Washington based Worldwatch Institute, and the recent Brundtland Report (Our Common Future) have continued to reinforce this same message.[26]

Not surprisingly, many of the ecopolitical publications that appeared in the climate of the early 1970s - especially those that appeared in the immediate aftermath

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23. Mihajlo Mesarovic and Eduard Pestel, Mankind at the Turning Point (New York: Dutton, 1974), p. 142.

24. See, for example, Enzensberger, "A Critique of Political Ecology."

25. Gerald O. Barney, study director, The Global 2000 Report to the President: Entering the Twenty-First Century, vol. I. (Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1982), p. 1.

26. Lester Brown, gen. ed., State of the World 1984 (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984) and annually thereafter; World Commission on Environment and Development (Chaired by Gro Harlem Brundtland), Our Common Future (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987). See also Richard J. Barnet, The Lean Years: Politics in the Age of Scarcity (London: Abacus, 1980).

of the "limits to growth" debate - shared an overriding preoccupation with human survival, a sense of great urgency, a new, practical and empirical frame of mind, and a preparedness to call for tighter governmental controls.[27] Gone were the heady New Left pleas for freedom, citizen participation, and the "good life." In their stead came sober discussions of resource rationing, increasing government intervention, centralization, and population control. The new message, expressed eloquently by Robert Heilbroner in the closing pages of An Inquiry into the Human Prospect (a landmark "survivalist" publication that typified the mood and temper of the period), was that the individualistic Promethean spirit must give way to the example of Atlas - the spirit of fortitude, resolutely bearing whatever burdens were necessary to sustain life.[28] Appropriately, the cover of Heilbroner's book bears a picture of a doleful Atlas, stoically bearing the load of the earth on his shoulders.

As early as 1968, Garrett Hardin set the tone of this phase of the discussion in his influential essay "The Tragedy of the Commons" with his warning that freedom in the unregulated commons brings ruin to all.[29] Hardin's well-known parable of the

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27. The leading examples of this "survivalist" school were Garrett Hardin, Exploring New Ethics for Survival (Baltimore: Penguin, 1972); William Ophuls, "Leviathan or Oblivion?" in Toward a Steady State Economy, ed. Herman E. Daly (San Francisco: Freeman, 1973), pp. 215-30; William Ophuls, Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity: A Prologue to a Political Theory of the Steady State (San Francisco: Freeman, 1977); and Robert L. Heilbroner, An Inquiry into the Human Prospect (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974). It should be noted that Ophul's contribution is particularly wide-ranging and eclectic (e.g., he draws on elements of Plato, Aristotle, Benedictine communalism, Hobbes, Rousseau, Burke, Jeffersonian democracy, and Utopian Socialism) and it is possible to find in his work all three of the ecopolitical themes identified in this chapter. His "bottom line" orientation is, however, survivalist. Edward Goldsmith, a key author of Blueprint and long time editor of The Ecologist, may also be seen as partially belonging to this survivalist school. Although he advocates (unlike the survivalists) the immediate transition toward a society made up of decentralized, self-sufficient eco-communities he envisages that such a society would be planned and engineered by the nation state. This idiosyncratic mixture of paternalism, utopianism, and radical conservatism is particularly evident in the final chapter of his recent book The Great U-Turn: De-Industrializing Society (Hartland, U.K.: Green Books, 1988) where he emphasizes the importance of traditional, stabilizing institutions (such as the family and religious hierarchies) and rejects public social security institutions in favour of community self-help.

28. Heilbroner, Human Prospect, see pp. 142-44.

29. Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," Science 162 (1968): 1243-48. Reprinted in K. S. Shrader-Frechette, ed., Environmental Ethics (Pacific Grove, C.A.: Boxwood Press, 1981), pp. 242-52 (all citations refer to this reprint.)

medieval herdsmen overstocking the commons vividly demonstrates the tragic dynamic that arises when people are motived by an economic "rationality" that has as its sole objective the maximisation of individual gain in the short term. Hardin argues that when people act according to such an economic rationality they will inevitably despoil the commons, even when they have full knowledge of the mounting public cost that the pursuit of private gain will bring.[30] Hardin's answer to the tragedy - "mutual coercion, mutually agreed upon by the majority of the people affected" - marked this "survivalist" school as one whose overriding preoccupation was to find the means of warding off disaster and discover a minimally acceptable way of life rather than search for the "good life."[31]

Hardin did not, however, extend his eco-social contract theory (which rested on mutual agreement by the majority of the people affected) to the global population problem. His notorious neo-Malthusian "life-boat ethic," which argued against a more equitable distribution of the world's resources on the grounds that we would all "go under," has been widely condemned for protecting the advantages of the affluent and pronouncing a death sentence for the poor.[32] As Richard Barnet has argued:

> The specter of the hungry mob supports Hobbesian politics, a world of struggle over inadequate resources that cries out for Leviathan, the authoritarian state that can keep minimal order. The Malthusian fantasy offers an alternative to the Leviathan state. There is no need for a civil authority to regulate scarce goods, because Nature, cruel only to be kind, periodically thins the surplus by famine.[33]

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30. That traditional commons were mostly managed on a sustainable basis by local people for mutual benefit (see Susan Jane Buck Cox, "No Tragedy on the Commons," Environmental Ethics 7 [1985]: 49-61; and John Reader, "Human Ecology: How Land Shapes Society," New Scientist, 8 September 1988, pp. 51-55, especially p. 51) does not detract from the force of Hardin's parable in highlighting the "free rider" and Prisoner's Dilemma problems in public choice theory. Moreover, Hardin has replied to John Reader's critique by pointing out that his article was essentially about, and should have been titled, "The Tragedy of the Unmanaged Commons." See Hardin, "Commons Failing," New Scientist, 22 October 1988, p. 76.

31. Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," p. 10. Hardin's formula ("mutual coercion, mutually agreed upon by the majority of the people affected") is often referred to disparagingly as an apology for authoritarianism yet it has much more in common with the democratic "self-limiting" social contract theory of Lockean liberalism (with its concern for limited government) than it does with a heavy handed totalitarian state or absolute sovereign.

32. See, for example, Barnet, The Lean Years, pp. 297-98.

As we have seen, the general preoccupation with survival also stamped Heilbroner's somber inquiry, which opens with the searching and troubling question: "Is there hope for humanity?" After exploring world demographic trends in the context of the persistent threat of nuclear war and the escalation of environmental degradation, Heilbroner reached a reluctant and pessimistic conclusion. Given "human nature" (which Heilbroner saw as fundamentally selfish), our only hope for survival lies in our obedient rallying behind a centralized, authoritarian nation - the only institutional form that Heilbroner saw as capable of extracting the necessary sacrifices, regulating distribution, and redirecting agriculture and industry along ecologically sustainable lines.

Since Heilbroner's major concern is the fundamental issue of human survival, he does not address (and would probably think it a luxury to consider) the question of how to preserve and foster the more agreeable aspects of human nature, at least during the convulsive period of transition. Faced with the urgency of the interrelated crises confronting humankind (particularly the environmental crisis) Heilbroner adopts an empirical frame of mind, focusing on how people are likely to behave rather than on what people might eventually become. In this context, he insists that we cannot afford to ignore obdurate human characteristics and build a future on unrealistic beliefs.[34] In Heilbroner's assessment, people will not willingly acquiesce in giving up a way of life, particularly where it entails the enjoyment of relative privileges. It is this premise that sets the tone of Heilbroner's entire analysis. Indeed, Heilbroner offers the provocative thesis that perhaps our main hope for survival lies in our latent yearning for obedience to, and identification with, authority. According to Heilbronner, such a yearning - which he sees as a "psychological substratum" of the human personality that can be traced back to our long period of

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33. Ibid., p. 296-97.

34. Heilbroner saw an "ultimate certitude" in environmental destruction, which placed it in an altogether different category from the threat of nuclear war (Human Prospect, p. 47).

helplessness and dependency as infants - will enable us all to rally behind an authoritarian government![35]

It deserves mention, however, that although Heilbroner sees centrally planned, authoritarian states as the necessary transitional scenario, it is clear that this is not what he would personally wish for. Rather, his preference is for

> ... a diminution in scale, a reduction in the size of the human community from the dangerous level of immense nation states toward the "polis" that defined the appropriate reach of political power for the ancient Greeks.[36]

In Heilbroner's view, however, this vision (which is the one generally promoted in Blueprint for Survival) is highly improbable in the short and immediate term.[37]

Heilbroner's political conclusion (that macro-constraints on human freedom are essential to make possible the transition from a growth oriented to a steady state society) has also been endorsed to a large extent by William Ophuls, although Ophuls argues for the retention of certain micro-freedoms so that we have a macro-autocracy and micro-democracy.[38] Like Heilbroner, Ophuls also admits his preference for a smaller scaled, face-to-face democracy of the Greek city state or Jeffersonian type, which he sees as the most appropriate vehicle for the pursuit of "the good life," but he considers that "reforming a 'corrupt people' is a Herculean task" (recall Heilbroner's Atlas!). In Ophuls' view, we are ultimately confronted with a limited choice between "Leviathan or oblivion."[39] Although Ophuls has since moderated his position by placing a greater emphasis on the need for self restraint than on the need for external

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35. Ibid., see pp. 118-22 and 131-32.

36. Ibid., p. 135.

37. It is interesting to note that Heilbroner prophesises that the society that will eventually emerge in the long term (i.e., after the difficult transitional period) will be one that will stress parsimony, an end to the giant factory, the huge office, and perhaps the urban complex. He also speculates that society will turn in the direction of many pre-industrial societies, emphasizing tradition and ritual and "the exploration of inner states of experience rather than the outer world of fact and material accomplishment." He sees the ethos of science and the work ethic as playing a much less prominent role while individual expression will give way to a greater extent to the dictates of the community. Ibid., see pp. 139-40.

38. See Ophuls, "Leviathan or Oblivion?" and Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity.

39. Ophuls, "Leviathan or Oblivion?" p. 227.

coercion, he continues to maintain that the latter must be resorted to if calls for the former are unsuccessful.[40]

Ophuls and Heilbroner may be seen as offering more interventionist variants of Hardin's call to "legislate temperance" by "mutual coercion, mutually agreed upon" in order to mitigate the ecologically and socially destructive rationality that characterizes human behaviour in the "free" or unmanaged commons. Heilbroner's and Ophul's fellow Americans are seen as sharing the same characteristics as Hardin's herdsmen insofar as they are understood as "selfish hedonists rationally seeking private gain." They therefore have much in common with the model of the self-interested human who roamed in Hobbes's and Locke's state of nature insofar as they are seen as being in perpetual (Hobbes) or intermittent (Locke) conflict with the interests of the larger natural and social community to which they belong. In such a context, salvation can only come from the surrendering of a considerable degree of individual liberty to a central authority. Indeed, Ophuls has frequent recourse to the social contract theories of the 17th and 18th centuries, suggesting that the constitutional limits of the central authority of the future might be struck in accordance with a new "ecological contract" that would (hopefully) be based on prudent self-restraint and seek harmony not only between humans but also between humans and nature.[41] However, unlike the social contract of Locke (which was based on cornucopian assumptions), the ecological contract would be based on the Hobbesian premise of scarcity and would therefore require an all powerful Leviathan, not just a limited government.[42] That is, if freedoms are not voluntarily surrendered by citizens, then they would have to be imposed externally by a sovereign power.[43]

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40. Ophuls, Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity, see Chapter 8.

41. Ibid., pp. 164-65.

42. Ken Walker has argued that Ophuls has mistaken the postulates that underpin Hobbes's grim conclusion as to the necessity for Leviathan. According to Hobbes, the central characteristic of humans in the state of nature was the desire for eminence - to be better than one's neighbours - whether or not there was material scarcity. This includes not only a desire for more material goods than others but also a desire for more status and power. Such a characteristic is relational and scarce by definition; a society of "eminence seeking individuals" would be engaged in perpetual conflict regardless of whether the society was large or small, well or poorly endowed. Hence

The authoritarian solutions proffered by Heilbroner and Ophuls and the life-boat ethics of Hardin have prompted a number of critics to ask just what is to be sacrificed in the name of human survival and to ponder whether perhaps the price might be too high.[44] In particular, the dire analyses of this "survivalist" school have been widely criticized (particularly, but not only, by socialist theorists) for displaying an insensitivity to old conflicts such as national rivalry and the gap between rich and poor. As Andrew Feenberg has observed, this insensitivity

> ... leads to a politics of despair that would freeze the current relations of force in the world - and with them the injustices they sustain - as a condition for solving the issue of survival.[45]

Similarly, Enzensberger has criticized those who employ the "brotherly" rhetoric of "space-ship earth" for conveniently overlooking "the difference between first class steerage, between the bridge and the engine room."[46] Others, re-asserting the participatory theme, have argued that it is the very erosion of liberal democracy that has enabled powerful elites to pursue, with the backing of the State, environmentally destructive growth.[47] What is needed is more rather than less participation in

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the necessity for an absolute sovereign. Ophuls, however, mistakes Hobbes as identifying material scarcity as the source of social disorder and therefore wrongly believes that only a centralized autocracy can secure the necessary social order. Yet material scarcity need not necessarily lead to autocracy in the context of a non-eminence model of rational behaviour. A more co-operative social contract might just as easily provide a rational solution to the Prisoner's Dilemma and "free rider" problems. See K. J. Walker, "The Environmental Crisis: A Critique of Neo-Hobbesian Responses," Polity 21 (1988): 67-81.

43. Ophuls has framed the central question as follows: "How is the common interest of the collectivity to be achieved when men throughout history have shown themselves to be passionate creatures prey to greed, selfishness and violence?" William Ophuls, "Reversal is the Law of Tao: The Immanent Resurrection of Political Philosophy," in Environmental Politics, ed. Stuart S. Nagel (New York: Praeger, 1974), pp. 34-48 at p. 37. Indeed, Ophuls has heralded the conservative political thinker Edmund Burke to be "the last great spokesman for the premodern point of view" and has endorsed his view that (i) humans are by nature passionate, (ii) there must therefore be checks on will and appetite, and (iii) if these checks are not self-imposed then they must be imposed externally by a sovereign power. See Ophuls, Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity, p. 235.

44. Michael E. Kraft, "Analyzing Scarcity: The Politics of Social Change," Alternatives (Winter, 1978): 30-33, see p. 31.

45. Andrew Feenberg, "Beyond the Politics of Survival," Theory and Society 7 (1979): 319-61 at p. 323.

46. Enzensberger, "A Critique of Political Ecology," pp. 15-17.

government; the survivalists, according to this view, have seriously overestimated the capabilities of centralized institutions and underestimated the capabilities of decentralized, democratic political institutions to respond to the crisis.[48]

While agreeing with the need for more participation, other theorists have expressed more deep-seated reservations about the capacity of liberal democracy to meet the ecological challenge. As Susan Leeson has put it:

> ... if authoritarianism is the response to the inability of popular governments to impose the limits required to avoid ecological disaster, such a response merely reflects the crisis to which modern political philosophy and liberalism have led; it is not itself a solution.[49]

What is needed, these critics argue, is a fundamental re-examination of the basic axioms of liberalism such as possessive individualism, private property, limited government, and market freedom. According to Leeson:

> ... it was the unleashing of the passion for material abundance, legitimized by Hobbesian natural right, amplified by Locke, combined with the rejection of the classical commitment to reason and proper limits that caused the ecological crisis.[50]

It was this kind of ecological critique of liberalism that led many ecopolitical theorists to turn to the broad socialist tradition as an alternative. Yet, as we shall see in the following section, other ecopolitical theorists found many of the ecologically problematic assumptions of liberalism to be also embedded in the socialist tradition.[51] From this important dialogue between survivalists and their

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47. Volkmar Lauber, "Ecology, Politics and Liberal Democracy," Government and Opposition 13 (1978): 199-217.

48. See, for example, David W. Orr and Stuart Hill, "Leviathan, the Open Society, and the Crisis of Ecology," The Western Political Quarterly 31 (1978): 457-69, and Robert Holsworth, "Recycling Hobbes: The Limits to Political Ecology," The Massachusetts Review 20 (1979): 9-40. Robert Paehlke has pointed out that at the time Ophuls and Heilbroner wrote their pessimistic theoretical treatises, environmental interest groups were busily expanding opportunities for democratic participation in resource management. See Robert Paehlke, "Democracy, Bureaucracy, and Environmentalism," Environmental Ethics 10 (1988): 291-308. Paehlke argues (contra John Passmore, who believes there is a readiness among environmentalists to approve of coercive measures [Man's Responsibility for Nature (London: Duckworth, 1974), pp. 60-61, 96, and 99]) that the new wave of environmentalism is overwhelmingly pro-democratic.

49. Susan M. Leeson, "Philosophic Implications of the Ecological Crisis: The Authoritarian Challenge to Liberalism," Polity 11 (1979): 303-18 at p. 305.

50. Ibid., p. 317.

critics there emerged the highly contested question: is socialism ecologically salvageable or must we look elsewhere, that is, beyond liberalism and socialism for ecopolitical enlightenment? This question is addressed in the following section.

Despite the widespread criticism of the authoritarian response to the deepening ecological crisis, it would be wrong to dismiss the survivalists' contribution out of hand. First, they have done much to draw attention to the seriousness of the ecological crisis and have challenged the widespread complacency concerning the ability of existing political values and institutions to respond to the crisis. Second, the controversial nature of the authoritarian solutions that surfaced in the wake of the "limits to growth" debate has encouraged the search for more deep seated cultural transformations along with alternative, nonauthoritarian institutions that would foster a more co-operative and democratic response to the environmental crisis. In this respect, the above authoritarian scenarios have become sobering reminders of what can and might happen if remedial action is too little or too late. These scenarios have thus served as a useful foil for later democratic and ecologically oriented theorists who have sought to develop an alternative solution to the environmental crisis that incorporates yet revises and transcends the general participatory ethos of the 1960s, which had been largely premised on cornucopian assumptions.

The Environmental Problematic as a Crisis of Culture and Character and as an Opportunity for Emancipation[52]

Many of those who were critical of the survivalist school responded by extending ecopolitical debate beyond the realm of "physical externalities" to the very

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51. For a general overview see Robert Paehlke, Environmentalism and the Future of Progressive Politics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), Chapter 7. Although Paehlke notes that environmentalists occupy a wide range of positions on the traditional ideological spectrum, he nonetheless concludes that environmentalism "implies some doubt about the liberal tradition of technocratic management. It suggests that we need to find new means of intervening deeply in the market process - an idea foreign to liberalism and moderate progressivism" (p. 211). On the general incompatibility of American liberalism with environmentalism, see Walter Truett Anderson, "Editor's Introduction: The Crisis of Liberalism," in Rethinking Liberalism, ed. Walter Truett Anderson (New York: Avon Books, 1983), pp. 1-22.

52. The phrase "culture and character" is a taken (albeit in reversed form) from the title given to Chapter 10 in Bill Devall and George Sessions, Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered (Layton, Utah: Gibbs M. Smith, 1985).

notion of material progress and to the social and psychological costs of the instrumental rationality that facilitated it: alienation, loss of meaning, the coexistence of extreme wealth and extreme poverty, welfare dependence, dislocation of tribal cultures, the growth of an urban monoculture, and the concomitant reduction in cultural diversity.[53] For those who took this step, the sanguine reliance on future "technological fixes" and better planning - seen by many other critics of survivalism as the definitive rejoinder to the "limits to growth" projections - was increasingly recognized as part of the problem rather than the solution. By the late 1970s and early 1980s, a growing number of ecopolitical thinkers were pointing to the new cultural opportunities that lay in what had hitherto been pessimistically approached by the "survivalists" as a dire crisis with a limited range of options. In short, these ecopolitical theorists began to draw out what they saw as the new emancipatory potential that they believed was latent within the ecological critique of industrialism. Moreover, this new project entailed much more than a simple re-assertion of the modern emancipatory ideal of human autonomy or self-determination; it also entailed a reevaluation of the foundations of, and the conditions for, human autonomy or self-determination in Western political thought.

The general tenor of this third emancipatory phase of ecopolitical inquiry may be best introduced in the voices of some of its leading contributors. According to William Leiss:

> No elaborate argument should be necessary to establish that there are some limits to economic and population growth. But everything depends upon whether we regard such limits as a bitter disappointment or as a welcome opportunity to turn from quantitative to qualitative improvement in the course of creating a conserver society.[54]

John Rodman has sounded a similar theme:

> ... to the extent that limits are perceived as external to us, they may have to be imposed on us by authoritarian governments; whereas the more they are perceived as arising from within personal and social experience - e.g., in the form of frustration resulting from the limits to consumption ... or in the form of

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53. See, for example, Fred Hirsch, Social Limits to Growth (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976) and William Leiss, The Limits to Satisfaction: On Needs and Commodities (London: Marion Boyars, 1978).

54. Leiss, The Limits to Satisfaction, p. 112.

> dissatisfaction with the one-dimensionality of the life of production/consumption ... then the more the "limits to [industrial] growth" emerge "naturally," and the appropriate role for government appears, which is not to repress growth, but to stop forcing it ... and to facilitate the transition to the steady state.[55]

As early as 1965 Murray Bookchin argued, in a prophetic and pioneering essay entitled "Ecology and Revolutionary Thought," that the insights of ecology offered a critique of society "on a scale that the most radical systems of political economy have failed to attain."[56] Since that time Bookchin has maintained the argument that the cultivation of an ecological society, resting on the principles of social ecology, will serve to expand rather than narrow the realm of freedom or self-directedness of all members of the ecocommunity, nonhumans included.

Theodore Roszak, another pioneer of this emancipatory approach to ecopolitics, has pointed to what he sees as the "vital reciprocity" between person and planet:

> My purpose is to suggest that the environmental anguish of the earth has entered our lives as a radical transformation of human identity. The needs of the planet and the needs of the person have become one, and together they have begun to act upon the central institutions of our society with a force that is profoundly subversive, but which carries the promise of cultural renewal.[57]

Rudolf Bahro, in a somewhat ironic tone, has signalled his indebtedness to the environmental crisis because it has forced us to re-examine the question of emancipation in fresh terms. According to Bahro, if the earth were infinite and if there were no problems of energy shortages and resource depletion, we would continue to believe (falsely, in Bahro's view) that the road to freedom lay in material expansion.[58] Bahro has argued that the environmental crisis, which he has claimed to be the "quintessential crisis of capitalism," has forced us to re-examine not only the psychological costs of the competitive and expansionary ethos of our materialist culture but also our imperialist attitude towards other species.

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55. Rodman, "Paradigm Change in Political Science," p. 72.

56. Bookchin, Post-Scarcity Anarchism p. 58.

57. Theodore Roszak, Person/Planet: The Creative Disintegration of Industrial Society (London: Paladin, 1981, originally published 1979), p. 15.

58. Rudolf Bahro, "Socialism, Ecology and Utopia: An Interview," History Workshop 16 (1983): 91-99, see p. 94.

In a similar vein, Christopher Stone, in his eloquent defence of the "rights" of nonhuman beings, has regarded the environmental crisis as offering an opportunity for metaphysical reconstruction and moral development. In voicing the approach taken by a growing number of ecophilosophers, Stone argued:

> ... whether we will be able to bring about the requisite institutional and population growth changes depends in part upon effecting a radical shift in our feelings about "our" place in the rest of Nature.
>
> A radical new conception of man's relationship to the rest of nature would not only be a step towards solving the material planetary problems; there are strong reasons for such a changed consciousness from the point of making us better human beings.[59]

On this note, Bill Devall and George Sessions have argued for the cultivation of new "character and culture." By this they mean the "development of mature persons who understand the immutable connection between themselves and the land community or person/planet" and who act in ways that "serve both the vital needs of persons and nonhumans."[60]

What is common to these various responses to the ecological crisis? First and foremost, the environmental crisis is regarded not only as a crisis of participation and survival but also as a crisis of culture in the broadest sense of the term, that is, "the total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values, and knowledge, which constitute the shared bases of social action."[61] Indeed, this was exemplified as early as 1972 in the manifesto of the New Zealand Values Party - the world's first national Green party - which spoke of New Zealand being in a "new depression ... a depression of human values, a downturn not in the national economy but in the national spirit."[62]

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59. Christopher Stone, Should Trees Have Standing?: Toward Legal Rights for Natural Objects (Los Altos, California: Kaufman, 1974), p. 48. On this theme, see also Thomas E. Hill, Jr., "Ideals of Human Excellence and Preserving Natural Environments," Environmental Ethics 5 (1983): 211-24.

60. Devall and Sessions, Deep Ecology, p. 180.

61. Collins English Dictionary (London: Collins, 1983).

62. See Stephen Rainbow, "Eco-politics in Practice: Green Parties in New Zealand, Finland and Sweden," Paper presented to the Ecopolitics IV conference, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 21-24 September 1989, p. 5. It has been argued that the world's first Green party was the United Tasmania Group, formed in 1972 in the Australian state of Tasmania shortly before the founding of the New Zealand Values Party in the same year. See Pamela Walker, "The United Tasmania Group: An Analysis of the World's First Green Party," in Environmental Politics in Australia and

Second, this theme of cultural malaise and the need for cultural renewal has meant that emancipatory ecopolitical theorists have directed considerable attention toward the revitalization of civil society rather than, or in addition to, the state. This is reflected in the concern of emancipatory theorists to find ways of theoretically integrating the concerns of the environmental movement with other new social movements, particularly those concerning feminism, peace, and Third World aid and development (see Chapter 3). This new theoretical project sought ways of overcoming the destructive logic of capital accumulation, the acquisitive values of consumer society, and, more generally, all systems of domination (including class domination, patriarchy, imperialism, racism, totalitarianism, and the domination of nature).

This was indeed a bold and ambitious theoretical project and one for which the two major political philosophies of modern times - liberalism and Marxism - seemed either poorly or only partially equipped. Indeed, the limitations in these two political philosophies have served as general theoretical points of departure for emancipatory ecopolitical theorists, as I show in the following section.

Before introducing this emancipatory critique of liberalism and Marxism, however, I should briefly explain why I do not consider it necessary to examine the relationship between the conservative tradition of political thought and emancipatory ecopolitical thought. The reason is that conservatism's opposition to social and political experimentation and cultural change and its endorsement of hierarchical authority and the established order of things put it at considerable odds with the culturally innovative and egalitarian ethos of emancipatory ecopolitical thought. This is not to deny that there are certain links and resonances to be found between conservatism and Green thought - such as prudence, the desire to conserve existing things (buildings, nature reserves, endangered values) to maintain continuity with the past, and the rejection of totalitarianism. Indeed, some conservative thinkers have

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New Zealand, ed. Peter Hay, Robyn Eckersley, and Geoff Holloway (Hobart: University of Tasmania, 1989), pp. 161-74, and Stephen Rainbow, "New Zealand's Values Party: The Rise and Fall of the First National Green Party," in Hay, Eckersley, and Holloway, eds., Environmental Politics in Australia and New Zealand, pp. 175-88.

made an indirect contribution to emancipatory ecopolitical thought (e.g., Thomas Carlyle via William Morris, Edmund Burke via William Ophuls).[63] However, these interesting resonances and links are substantially overshadowed by the conservative tradition's fundamental resistance to the experimental, egalitarian, and nonhierarchical ethos of Green theory and practice. It is for this reason that I have summarily dismissed conservatism as a serious contender in the emancipatory ecopolitical stakes.

The Emancipatory Ecopolitical Critique of Liberalism and Marxism: An Introduction

Emancipatory ecopolitical theorists have done much to draw attention to the similarities between liberalism and Marxism. They have noted, for example, that while social relations between humans are theoretically different under capitalism and socialism, the relationship between humans and the rest of nature appears to be essentially the same. This has also proved to be the case historically. As Langdon Winner has remarked:

> A crucial failure in modern political thought and political practice has been an inability or unwillingness even to begin ... the critical evaluation and control of our society's technical constitution. The silence of liberalism on this issue is matched by an equally obvious neglect in Marxist theory. Both persuasions have enthusiastically sought freedom in sheer material plenitude.[64]

Indeed, the international nature of environmental degradation, extending as it does beyond the "iron" and "bamboo" curtains, has lent force to the broader claim by emancipatory theorists that the modern ecological crisis is the quintessential crisis of industrialism rather than just Western capitalism. Industrialism encompasses the "state capitalism" of communist nations as well as the largely privately controlled market capitalism of Western nations, both of which are seen by emancipatory

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63. Although I have characterized Ophuls's "bottom line" position as "survivalist," an emancipatory approach is nonetheless discernible as a sub-theme in his highly eclectic and wide-ranging ecopolitical writings.

64. Langdon Winner, The Whale and the Reactor: A Search for Limits in an Age of High Technology (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1986), p. 57, quoted by Alan Drengson in his review of Winner's book in Environmental Ethics 9 (1987): 377-80 at p. 377.

theorists as resting upon the ideologies of growth and technological optimism.[65] This ecological critique is therefore concerned to emphasize the shared expansionary ethos of both East and West. In the Soviet Union, this ethos is encapsulated in the Programme of the Soviet Communist Party approved in 1961 at the twenty second party Congress, which stated that "Communism elevates man to a tremendous level of supremacy over nature and makes possible a greater and fuller use of its inherent forces."[66] One could just as easily substitute Western capitalism for communism in this confident assertion of modern humanity's technological mastery of nature.

To be sure, it was classical liberalism, underpinned by laissez faire economics and defended in the writings of John Locke and Adam Smith, rather than communism that originally underscored the fundamental direction of modern bourgeois political economy by basing it on cornucopian assumptions and an expanding economy. As Susan Leeson has argued:

> Lockean thought legitimated endless accumulation of material goods; helped equate the process of accumulation with liberty and the pursuit of happiness; helped implant the idea that with ingenuity man can go beyond the fixed laws of nature, adhering only to whatever temporary laws he establishes for himself in the process of pursuing happiness; and helped instill the notion that the "commons" is served best through each man's pursuit of private gain, because there will always be enough for those who are willing to work.[67]

Within this Lockean framework, the nonhuman world was seen in purely instrumental terms, that is, as no more than various kinds of means to human ends. After all, according to Locke, the earth had been given to humans for "the support and comfort of their being"; moreover, the mixing of human labour with nature was an act of

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65. For a discussion of ecological problems in the growth oriented and state controlled economy of Russia, see Marshall I. Goldman, The Spoils of Progress: Environmental Pollution in the Soviet Union (Cambridge, Mass.: The M.I.T. Press, 1972); D. Powell, "The Social Costs of Modernization: Ecological Problems in the U.S.S.R.," World Politics 22 (1972) 329-34; and Fred Singleton, "Eastern Europe: Do the Greens Threaten the Reds?," The World Today 42 (1986): 159-62. For a sample of problems in Asia and Africa, see Robert Eagle, "China and Tanzania: Economic Development and Environmental Problems," in International Dimensions of the Environmental Crisis, ed. Richard Barrett (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1982), pp. 239-52 at pp. 243-46.

66. Singleton, "Eastern Europe," p. 160.

67. Leeson, "Philosophic Implications of the Ecological Crisis," p. 306.

appropriation that created something valuable (i.e., property) out of something otherwise valueless (the earth in its state of "natural grace").[68]

Of course, it must be noted that some influential liberal philosophers have challenged this instrumental and expansionary ethos and introduced important qualifications concerning the extent to which it is permissible for humans to dominate the nonhuman world. Scattered among the writings of J. S. Mill, for example, one can find a defence of ecological diversity and a brief but eloquent case for a stationary state economy.[69] And Jeremy Bentham's extension of his utilitarian calculus to all sentient beings has provided the philosophical touchstone for contemporary animal liberation theorists such as Peter Singer.[70]

While some emancipatory theorists, such as John Rodman, have noted and discussed these by-ways in liberal thought, the general tendency has been to look to other political traditions for the ideals and principles that would underpin a sustainable and just post-liberal society.[71] In Rodman's own words:

> ... it seems unlikely, however, that a moral political philosophy that remains within the liberal paradigm of salvation through the insatiable transformation of nature into property will suffice today, no matter how much the social system resulting from acquisition is allowed to be regulated by considerations of scarcity.[72]

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68. Ibid., see pp. 305-6.

69. See J. S. Mill, Principles of Political Economy, ed. Donald Winch (Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1979), Chapter 6, pp. 111-17. For a discussion, see John Rodman, "The Liberation of Nature?," Inquiry 20 (1977): 83-145 at pp. 115-19.

70. Peter Singer, Animal Liberation (New York: Avon Books, 1975). These ideas are discussed in Chapter 2.

71. According to Rodman, J. S. Mill displayed an "ecological sensitivity" in his plea for individuality and diversity and his critique of monoculture, both of which Rodman interprets as indirectly affirming the intrinsic value of the nonhuman world ("The Liberation of Nature?," p. 116). Despite these observations, Rodman nonetheless delivers in this article a lengthy and convincing critique of attempts to extend the liberal notion of "rights" to the nonhuman world. Moreover, he has elsewhere made it clear that liberalism is incompatible with an ecocentric perspective (although he carries forward the liberal principles of diversity and tolerance.) See, for example, John Rodman, "What is Living and What is Dead in the Political Philosophy of T. H. Green," The Western Political Quarterly 26 (1973): 566-86.

72. Ibid., p. 580.

Indeed, the classical liberal defenders of individualism and laissez-faire economics are seen by emancipatory ecopolitical theorists as apologists for the very dynamic that has led to the "tragedy of the commons." And, as the survivalists had shown, the logical sequel of this dynamic is authoritarianism from above rather than self-limitation from below. Moreover, emancipatory theorists largely accept the democratic socialist critique of liberalism that the exercise of economic freedom by the privileged renders the exercise of both economic and political freedom largely illusory to the mass of ordinary working people, the unemployed, and the peoples of developing countries. In other words, the exercise of the inalienable rights of the individual heralded by liberalism, particularly property rights (which confer the right of exclusive use and disposal of land, labour, and capital) together with freedom of contract and market incentives, leads to the concentration of ownership and a system of power relations that negates the otherwise laudable liberal goal of free, autonomous development for everyone. Moreover, emancipatory theorists (like democratic socialists) do not consider it an acceptable solution merely to rely on the redistributive largesse of the welfare state to iron out excessive inequalities, since this merely brings the dispossessed into the market as passive consumers rather than self-determining producers (their only area of effective choice being how to spend their limited welfare cheques). Accordingly, emancipatory ecopolitical theorists re-assert the New Left theme of participation and self-management, but in a new ecological (rather than cornucopian) context.

More importantly, since liberal ideals were born in and depended upon a frontier setting, claims for distributive justice could only be appeased by the "trickle down" effect, providing the stock of wealth continued to expand (thereby maintaining relative inequalities in wealth and power). But once the frontier had been exhausted, the gap between rich and poor would be bound to intensify and the prospect of distributive justice would become more remote. In Rodman's view:

> In our time the Liberal-democratic-welfare-state seems to totter towards the ash-heap of history, its originally simple structure encumbered by a thousand adaptions, amendments, and compromises. John Rawl's magistral effort to

> make this monstrosity intelligible only made more glaring its internal tensions and its limitations.[73]

Similarly, Carl Boggs has argued that the high ideals of liberalism that had been proclaimed by Locke, Jefferson, Bentham, and Mill have been

> ... transformed into a ritualized belief system barely masking a highly centralized and expansionist corporate system. In economic terms liberalism failed to generate any new priorities that could encourage a shift away from outmoded patterns of production, work, and consumption ... liberalism, whatever its claims, is now compromised by a state system with ever shrinking ideological boundaries at a time when popular movements are striving to broaden those boundaries. The two forces - liberalism and the new movements - occupy polar extremes.[74]

This combined ecological and social critique of liberalism led emancipatory ecopolitical theorists to eschew the philosophy of "possessive individualism" and turn toward alternative political theories that, on the one hand, were more consonant with an ecological perspective or, at the very least, respectful of "ecological limits," and, on the other hand, were able to foster some kind of democratic, cooperative, and communitarian social arrangement.[75]

However, the socialist alternative, while seen by many emancipatory theorists to be theoretically preferable to liberal political philosophy insofar as it made room for collective economic decision-making and a fairer distribution of society's stock of wealth, was found to be ultimately wedded to the same expansionary ethos and anthropocentric framework as liberalism. As I show in Chapter 4, Marxists, by and large, merely disagreed with liberals on how the drive to cornucopia was to be realized and on how the "spoils of progress" were to be managed and divided. Like

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73. John Rodman, "Analysis and History; Or, How the Invisible Hand Works Through Robert Nozick," Western Political Quarterly 29 (1976): 197-201 at p. 199. As to liberalism's ability to deal with the ecological crisis, it is noteworthy that John Rawls has himself acknowledged that his theory of justice is limited to human relations and that it may need to be revised in order to encompass our moral relations with the nonhuman world. John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), see pp. 17 and 512.

74. Carl Boggs, Social Movements and Political Power: Emerging Forms of Radicalism in the West (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), pp. 6-7.

75. Mark Sagoff has likewise observed that "environmentalism may seem, then, to involve a sort of communitarianism that is inconsistent with principles traditionally associated with a liberal state." See Sagoff's chapter "Can Environmentalists be Liberals?" in The Economy of the Earth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 146-70 at p. 147.

Locke, Marx saw economic activity, the act of producing via the appropriation of nature, as essential to human freedom. Indeed, Marx's labour theory of value, according to which the exchange value of a commodity is determined by labour and labour alone, had been heavily influenced by the ideas of the British classical economists. Where Marx differed from liberal theorists was in his rejection of the institution of private property on the grounds that it gave rise to class domination and the appropriation of surplus value from the worker. His was, however, essentially an immanent critique of liberalism; that is, he sought to call it to account on the basis of its own standards, pointing out its internal contradictions and arguing that universal autonomy demanded the extension of democracy beyond political life to include social and economic life - especially the workplace. However, like Locke, Marx regarded the nonhuman world as no more than the ground of human activity, acquiring value if and when it became transformed by human labour or its extension - technology. Despite the Marxist challenge to the inequities of capital accumulation and to the contradictions inherent in the liberal ideal of freedom, the Marxist concept of freedom was also found to be premised on an anthropocentric outlook and, to adopt Langdon Winner's phrase, "sheer material plenitude." Moreover, from a social perspective, sceptical critics pointed to two rather disparate and contradictory strains in Marxism, namely

> ... a commitment to popular self-activity as the basis of social transformation, and a rationalizing impulse that gave primacy to a Jacobin-style political mobilization from above [i.e., control by an autocratic cadre or vanguard that determines what is the public interest].[76]

Was it possible to avoid the latter tendency, which had been borne out in the major Marxist revolutions of the modern world?

The upshot of this critical re-reading of the two most influential pillars of modern political philosophy had been sobering. From Hobbes and Locke through to Marx the notion of human self-realization through the domination and transformation of nature persisted as an unquestioned axiom of political inquiry. As Rodman has shown, in the modern era the solution to poverty, injustice, and inequality had become

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76. Boggs, Social Movements and Political Power, p. 7.

dependent on the abolition of scarcity via technological innovation and industrial growth - an approach that has been traced to the Enlightenment ideal of the progressive liberation of humans from all traditional and natural limits.[77] Now, however, emancipatory ecopolitical theorists accept the survivalist argument that the modern era must be seen as but a temporary suspension of the tradition of scarcity, as an aberrant period in human history. Some have likened it to the "pioneer" stage of ecological succession (i.e., where rapid growth and aggressive exploitation takes place) that must soon phase into a more mature, steady-state, climax community.[78]

As we have seen, orthodox socialist theory - despite its more egalitarian promise - did not appear suitable as an alternative framework for an ecologically benign, conserver society, at least not without extensive theoretical revision. A key question posed for emancipatory theorists was whether there were other strands in the broad socialist tradition that were ecologically salvageable. If not, it would be necessary to look elsewhere for ecological enlightenment, that is, beyond liberalism and socialism and toward such alternatives as communitarianism, anarchism, and feminism.

As we shall see in Chapters 4 to 8, however, this new breed of emancipatory theorists rapidly divided over the question as to what kind of post-liberal social and political theory could best address the interrelated social and environmental problems of the modern world: was it Neo-Marxism, Democratic Socialism, Anarchism, Feminism, or some revised combination thereof?

At a more fundamental ecophilosophical level, deep divisions also developed over the question concerning our proper relationship to the nonhuman world. That is, while most emancipatory theorists agreed that it was not enough simply to return to the participatory and counter-cultural ethos of the 1960s (with its cornucopian assumptions of an ever growing stock of wealth), serious disagreement

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77. Rodman, "Paradigm Change in Political Science," see p. 61.

78. See, for example, William R. Catton, Jr. and Riley E. Dunlap, "A New Ecological Paradigm for Post-Exuberant Sociology," American Behavioral Scientist 24 (1980): 15-47, and Ophuls, Ecology and the Politics of Scarcity, p. 229.

developed as to how far the anthropocentric assumptions and technological aspirations of the modern world needed to be revised. This, I will argue below, has given rise to the most fundamental division within emancipatory ecopolitical thought.

The Anthropocentric/Ecocentric Cleavage Within Emancipatory Ecopolitical Inquiry

It should be clear from the above brief introduction to emancipatory ecopolitical inquiry that it is best understood as representing a spectrum of thought rather than a single political theory or an internally coherent bundle of ideas - a situation that reflects the current state of Green political thought. As a means of crystallizing the salient features of the ecophilosophical divisions within this spectrum of thought and providing a framework within which it may be approached, I divide emancipatory ecopolitical thought into two major streams: the anthropocentric emancipatory stream and the ecocentric emancipatory stream. The first stream is characterized by its concern to articulate an ecopolitical theory that offers new opportunities for human emancipation and fulfilment in the context of an ecologically sustainable society. The second stream pursues these same goals within the context of a broader notion of emancipation that also recognizes the nonhuman world and seeks to ensure that it too may unfold in its many diverse ways. This anthropocentric/ecocentric cleavage follows the ecophilosophical cleavage that is central to the relatively new but rapidly expanding field of environmental philosophy. The centrality of this distinction is reflected in the large number of broadly similar distinctions that have been coined not only in ecopolitical thought and environmental philosophy but also in environmental history and environmental sociology. It is reflected, for example, in Arne Naess's influential distinction between shallow ecology and deep ecology; in Timothy O'Riordan's characterization of "technocentrism" and "ecocentrism"; in the "Imperialist" and "Arcadian" traditions in ecological thought identified by the environmental historian Donald Worster; in Murray Bookchin's distinction between "environmentalism" and "social ecology"; and in William Catton and Riley Dunlap's distinction between the dominant "Human

Exemptionalism Paradigm" of mainstream sociology and the "New Ecological Paradigm" of the "post-exuberant age."[79]

Although some of these distinctions bear different nuances, they all contrast an anthropocentric (i.e., human-centred) approach to the nonhuman world with an ecocentric (i.e., ecology-centred or earth-centred) approach to the nonhuman world. In the case of the former, the nonhuman world is reduced to a storehouse of resources and is considered to have instrumental value only, that is, it is valuable only insofar as it can serve as an instrument, or as a means, to human ends. The latter approach, on the other hand, also values the nonhuman world - or at least aspects of it - for its own sake.

While Naess's brief but fertile characterization of deep and shallow ecology has proved to be the most influential in ecophilosophical circles, I adopt the more general ecocentric/anthropocentric distinction for the purposes of this inquiry since it is more immediately descriptive of the two opposing orientations it represents.[80] Besides, as Fox has convincingly shown in the most detailed analysis to date of the deep ecology approach to ecophilosophy, the shallow/deep ecology distinction

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79. Arne Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement. A Summary," Inquiry 16 (1973): 95-100. For a thorough account of how and why this distinction (which was not the first of its kind) has become so influential in ecophilosophical and wider circles, see Warwick Fox, Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism (Boston: Shambhala, 1990), forthcoming, especially Chapters 2 and 3 (all subsequent page citations refer to the prepublication ms). See also O'Riordan, Environmentalism, p. 1; Donald Worster, Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. xi; Murray Bookchin, Toward an Ecological Society (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980), pp. 58-59; and Bookchin, The Ecology of Freedom (Palo Alto, California: Cheshire, 1982), p. 21; William R. Catton, Jr. and Riley E. Dunlap, "A New Ecological Paradigm for Post-Exuberant Sociology"; and Catton and Dunlap, "Environmental Sociology: A New Paradigm," American Sociologist 13 (1978): 41-49.

Although the above list indicates something of the pervasiveness of the deep/shallow and comparable distinctions, it is by no means exhaustive. For the most thorough survey and discussion of comparable bi-partite distinctions in the ecophilosophical literature to date, see Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, pp. 25-41.

80. I prefer ecocentrism to biocentrism for the reasons given by Fox in "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels," Environmental Ethics 11 (1989): 5-25 at pp. 7-8. In particular, the prefix "eco" (unlike the prefix "bio") encompasses not only individual organisms that are biologically alive but also such things as species, populations, and cultures considered as entities in their own right.

actually subsumes three fundamental ideas or different senses: a popular sense (which argues against anthropocentrism and in favour of a general ecocentric outlook); a formal sense (which is concerned with asking deeper questions and deriving norms from fundamentals in accordance with Naess's normative systems approach to ecophilosophy); and a philosophical sense (which is concerned to cultivate a mode of being that sustains the widest possible identification with all beings and entities).[81] Fox shows that there is nothing distinctive about the popular sense of deep ecology (since many other ecophilosophical schools adopt an ecocentric approach) and that the formal sense of deep ecology is untenable (since one can just as easily derive anthropocentric norms from fundamental premises as nonanthropocentric norms). The philosophical sense of deep ecology, on the other hand, offers both a distinctive and tenable approach to ecophilosophy. However, Fox argues that it is more accurate to refer to this sense as "transpersonal ecology" - rather than deep ecology - since it refers to "the realization of a sense of self that extends beyond (or that is 'trans-') one's egoic, biographical, or personal sense of self" (the realization of this expansive sense of self is brought about by the process of identification).[82] In this inquiry I will therefore use the label "transpersonal ecology" to replace the label "deep ecology" unless the context of the discussion requires reference to the older label. Transpersonal ecology may be seen as representing one very promising and distinctive kind of ecocentric emancipatory approach.[83]

An alternative approach to classification might have been to locate emancipatory ecopolitical theory on the familiar left/right political spectrum. However, as we have seen, most contributors to this third phase of ecopolitical inquiry tend, in any event, to cluster to the left of this traditional spectrum insofar as they are seeking some kind of communitarian, co-operative, or democratic socialist solution (and here, it is not clear which of these approaches are supposed to be "more

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81. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, Chapter 4.

82. Ibid., Chapters 5 and 7.

83. Examples of other ecocentric approaches are provided in Chapter 2.

to the left"). Its use as an analytical framework in this context is therefore decidedly limited.

Another dimension that might be more profitably applied to these various left-leaning emancipatory approaches is that of community versus state control. In terms of my tripartite characterization of ecopolitical theory, this dimension would shed light on the different attempts by emancipatory theorists to resolve the tension between the participatory and survivalist themes of ecopolitical thought already discussed. It would also bring into sharp relief the differences between emancipatory ecopolitical theorists on matters such as political organization and strategy. However, as important as these themes are to Green theory (particularly with respect to the debates between ecoanarchists and ecosocialists, as I show in Chapters 6 and 7), the community versus state control dimension does not highlight what is distinctive about the emancipatory approach vis-a-vis the participatory and survivalist approaches to ecopolitics (i.e., the emphasis on cultural renewal, the emphasis on developing an ecological consciousness, and the critique of industrialism). More importantly, such a dimension does not adequately register the major ecophilosophical debates in emancipatory thought between anthropocentric and ecocentric Greens theorists. Nonetheless, the community versus state control dimension can serve as a useful adjunct to a more overarching ecophilosophical dimension.

The anthropocentric/ecocentric dimension registers the major ecophilosophical differences within emancipatory ecopolitics and brings into sharp focus the novel and challenging scope of these new ideas. Moreover, it does this in a way that helps to explain some of the diverging political responses to different ecological issues adopted by different schools of emancipatory thought, as I show below in my discussion of what I identify as two "litmus test" ecological issues.

For the reasons developed in the next chapter, I will be arguing that the most comprehensive, promising, and distinctive stream in this new emancipatory phase of ecopolitical theory is the ecocentric stream. Accordingly, the different emancipatory ecopolitical theories examined in the major part of this inquiry will be assessed in terms of where they fit on the anthropocentric/ecocentric emancipatory dimension.

To the extent that they fall short of the more comprehensive ecocentric perspective, they will be judged inadequate. To the extent that they point to problems associated with an ecocentric perspective, their critique will be addressed and evaluated. And to the extent that they contribute to the rounding out or further elaboration of an ecocentric ecopolitical perspective, particularly on social and institutional questions where much work needs to be done, their contribution will be incorporated accordingly.

What, then, are the salient features of the ecocentric emancipatory stream of ecopolitical thought? In terms of fundamental priorities, an ecocentric approach regards the question as to our proper place in the rest of nature as logically prior to the question of what are the most appropriate social and political arrangements for human communities. That is, the determination of social and political questions must proceed from, or at least be consistent with, an adequate determination of this more fundamental question. As exemplified in some of the quotations selected to introduce this third phase of inquiry, ecocentric ecopolitical theorists are distinguished by the emphasis they place on the need for a radical reconception of humanity's place in nature. In particular, ecocentric theorists take exception to the widely held view that humans are the pinnacle of evolution and the sole locus of value and meaning in the world. Instead, ecocentric theorists adopt an ethical position that regards all of the various multilayered parts of the biotic community as valuable for their own sake. (There are, of course, different degrees of anthropocentrism and ecocentrism, as I show in the following chapter. Here I am characterizing a thoroughgoing ecocentric perspective.)

This special emphasis given to ecological interconnectedness by ecocentric theorists provides the basis for a new sense of both empathy and caution. By this I mean, on the one hand, a greater sense of compassion for the fate of other life-forms (both human and nonhuman) and, on the other hand, a keener appreciation of the fact that many of our activities are likely to have a range of unforeseen consequences for ourselves and other life-forms.[84] The magnitude of the environmental crisis is seen

by ecocentric theorists as evidence of, among other things, an inflated sense of human self-importance and a misconceived belief in our capacity to fully understand biospherical processes. The ecocentric perspective is presented as a corrective to these misconceptions insofar as it underscores the need to proceed with greater caution and humility in our "interventions" in ecosystems.

It was the adoption of this thoroughgoing ecocentric perspective that most set this particular group of emancipatory ecopolitical thinkers apart from most of the influential New Left theorists of the 1960s who had addressed the problem of environmental degradation. To be sure, there has been an important re-assertion by ecocentric Green theorists of New Left themes (such as autonomy, self-management, and the critique of technocratic rationality) in response to authoritarian ecopolitical solutions. However, these themes are now relocated in a new ecocentric theoretical framework that draws inspiration from the insights of ecology rather than from the essentially human-centred orientation of the New Left. As we shall see in later chapters, from the perspective of this new ecocentric framework many of the New Left claims of the 1960s are now viewed as either metaphysically misguided (e.g., the claim for radical autonomy of thought and action) or too limited in ethical terms (e.g., the exclusive focus on human well-being). Anthropocentric emancipatory theorists, on the other hand, have maintained greater continuity with the New Left themes of the 1960s. The main point of difference, however, is that anthropocentric emancipatory theorists have revised the cornucopian assumptions of the 1960s in the wake of the "limits to growth debate" of the early 1970s. The result is a more ecologically informed (albiet still human-centred) emancipatory theory that provides a much more comprehensive critique of economic growth and technocratic rationality.

Emancipatory ecopolitical theory in general, but ecocentric emancipatory ecopolitical theory in particular, may be understood as challenging ecopolitical

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84. I use the term "life-forms" throughout this inquiry to include not only individual living organisms but also self-regenerating ecological entities such as populations, species, ecosystems, and the biosphere. The criterion of self-regeneration, or "autopoiesis," is explained and discussed in Chapter 2.

discourse and widening its agenda on three interrelated levels: human needs, technology, and self-image. At the political level, emancipatory theorists took the claims of the ecology movement seriously and began a critical inquiry into the structures of human needs and the "appropriateness" of many modern technologies. It was no longer considered adequate merely to challenge, say, the site of a nuclear power plant, freeway or chemical industry, or merely to insist on better safety devices or pollution filters. Instead, this third phase of ecopolitical inquiry sought to draw attention to the more fundamental question: to what extent do we really need these kinds of energy sources, these means of transport, these industries and technologies, and the like? Surely more of us can live richer and fuller lives if we can become less dependent on this kind of technological infrastructure and the kinds of commodities and lifestyles it offers? As Cornelius Castoriadis observed, whereas the working class movement had merely tackled the theme of authority (hence its focus on participatory and distributional issues), the ecology movement has questioned

> ... the scheme and structure of needs and the way of life. And that constitutes a very important transcendence of what could be seen as the unilateral character of former movements ... What is at stake in the ecological movement is the whole conception, the total position and relation between humanity and the world and, finally, the central and eternal question: what is human life? What are we living for?[85]

As we have seen, ecocentric theorists argue that the political questions as to what are legitimate human needs and lifestyles and what are "appropriate" technologies are inextricably linked to the more fundamental, philosophical question as to what is humanity's proper relationship with the rest of nature. And it is this more fundamental layer of questioning into our dominant orientation toward the world that has prompted the examination of the stock assumptions of the modern age, most notably anthropocentrism and its outgrowth, technological optimism. Moreover, the priority accorded to this fundamental layer of questioning by ecocentric Green theorists has meant that whatever social and political alternative is to be ultimately

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85. Cornelius Castoriadis, "From Ecology to Autonomy," Thesis Eleven 3 (1981): 7-22 at p. 20.

adopted, it will have to be theoretically compatible with an ecocentric philosophical matrix.

Notwithstanding the important differences between ecocentric and anthropocentric theorists, then, it is clear that there are significant commonalities between these two streams of emancipatory ecopolitical thought. As we have seen, both streams are distinguishable from other ecopolitical approaches in terms of their more penetrating diagnosis of environmental problems (i.e., these are seen as representing not just a crisis of participation and survival but also a crisis of culture and character). Both streams are also united in their optimistic attempt to offer a creative synthesis of the themes of participation and survival through the more encompassing theme of emancipation, which promises new opportunities for universal human self-realization. At the policy level, both streams are critical of indiscriminate economic growth, large scale organizations, "hard" (as distinct from "soft") energy paths, and ecologically and socially destructive technologies. Where these two approaches differ, however, is in the way they integrate these critiques theoretically and in the ecophilosophical justifications they provide for their alternative theoretical approaches. As we shall see, these different theoretical frameworks produce diverging responses to a range of important practical social and ecological issues. In particular, I would point to two "litmus" ecopolitical issues that highlight these ecophilosophical differences: human population growth and wilderness preservation. The ecocentric stream is noted for its greater willingness to advocate not simply a lessening of the growth rate of the human population but also a long term reduction in human numbers. Rather than address the matter of absolute numbers, the anthropocentric stream, on the other hand, tends to emphasise the social causes of population growth and argue the case for a more equitable distribution of resources between the rich and poor. The ecocentric stream is also noted for its greater readiness to advocate the setting aside of large tracts of wilderness, regardless of whether such preservation can be shown to be useful in some way to humankind. The anthropocentric stream, on the other hand, tends to be more preoccupied with the urban and agricultural human environment. Large scale wilderness preservation tends

not to be supported unless a human-centred justification can be demonstrated. These different emphases (along with numerous others) will emerge in the course of the ensuing critical exploration of the major emancipatory theories that are currently vying for ascendancy in Green political discourse.

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Having located the ecocentric emancipatory stream in the larger body of ecopolitical thought, the central questions to be examined in this inquiry can now be presented: (i) does an ecocentric approach have a natural ally within the existing pantheon of modern political traditions with which it can forge a theoretical linkage; or (ii) can an ecocentric approach be assimilated into any one of a number of different political traditions after appropriate revisions; or (iii) must ecocentric theorists develop an entirely novel social and political arrangement?

In order to narrow down the field of choice, it will be useful at this stage to outline a response to these questions from the perspective of emancipatory ecopolitical thought in general. This will provide the general parameters for the ensuing inquiry.

Although there is at present no unanimity among emancipatory ecopolitical theorists in response to these questions, definite leanings are discernible. First, as we have seen, emancipatory ecopolitical theorists are united by their intention to "head off" the acknowledged possibility of the survivalist solution, namely, that only a centrally planned, authoritarian state is capable of steering modern industrialized society through the convulsive process of de-industrialization into an ecologically sustainable, post-industrial society.

Second, the conservative political tradition may be ruled out as a serious contender in the ecopolitical stakes, notwithstanding the resonances with emancipatory ecopolitical thought that have been briefly noted in this chapter. This is because conservatism's endorsement of the established order, hierarchical authority, and paternalism and its resistance to cultural innovation and social and political

experimentation put it at considerable odds with the egalitarian and innovative orientation of emancipatory ecopolitical thought.

Third, all emancipatory ecopolitical theorists roundly reject neo-conservative or "free market" liberalism, since this is understood as giving free rein to the very dynamic that has given rise to the "tragedy of the (unmanaged) commons." This does not, however, entail an outright rejection of entrepreneurial activity or of the market as a method of resource allocation - only that the market become subordinate to ecological and social justice considerations. Beyond this, however, emancipatory ecopolitical theory, particularly the ecocentric stream, is still very much in its infancy and there is so far little agreement as to what mix of private and public economic endeavour would best secure a socially just and ecologically sustainable society. The arguments for the rejection of classical liberal philosophy have already been canvassed earlier in this chapter and will not (apart from a brief discussion in the following chapter) be pursued in any detail in the remainder of this inquiry. It should be noted, however, that the emancipatory critique of liberalism has not led to an outright rejection of the entire cluster of liberal values. The (usually unacknowledged) retention by emancipatory theorists of the enduring liberal values of tolerance for diversity, basic human rights (e.g., freedom of speech, assembly, and association), and (for some) limited government indicates that emancipatory political theory is decidedly post- rather than anti-liberal.

Fourth, although Marxist and neo-Marxist theories have also attracted their due share of ecological critiques, they have, on the whole, proved to be more resilient than classical liberalism. Marxism's penetrating critique of capitalist relations and its promise of universal human self-realization has continued to exert a considerable sway on the anthropocentric, and to a much lesser extent, ecocentric streams of emancipatory ecopolitical thought. For these reasons, Marxist and neo-Marxist responses will be critically explored in detail in Chapters 4 and 5 (if only to show that both are ultimately incompatible with an ecocentric perspective).

Fifth, in view of the broad egalitarian and democratic ethos of emancipatory ecopolitical thought and its sympathy with the concerns of new social movements,

democratic socialist, utopian socialist, anarchist, and certain feminist approaches have enjoyed widespread support among emancipatory theorists of both persuasions. Accordingly, these political theories will be examined in Chapters 6, 7, and 8.[86]

Sixth, no emancipatory theorist has been able to come up with an entirely novel social and political arrangement, that is, one that has not already been mooted in modern social and political theory. By this I am not meaning to argue that there is nothing new or distinctive about emancipatory ecopolitical thought, only that the newness or distinctiveness of emancipatory ecopolitical thought is not primarily to be found in the various social and political forms defended by its theorists. Rather, the principal newness or distinctiveness of emancipatory ecopolitical thought (and this applies more to the ecocentric than the anthropocentric stream) lies in the different ecophilosophical perspective that is brought to bear upon contemporary problems, the different and more encompassing kind of critique that is applied to existing social and political institutions, and the different and more encompassing ethical and political justifications provided for the various (not unfamiliar) social and political arrangements that are proposed.

Having now narrowed down the field of political choice, the central questions in this inquiry that I posed above may be reduced to the following single question: to what extent are the various post-liberal, neo- and post-Marxist, communitarian, and egalitarian traditions identified above (including their various tributaries) theoretically compatible with an ecocentric perspective? I intend to show that all of these communitarian and egalitarian traditions have certain important affinities with an ecocentric perspective, but that significant revisions are also required. Generally speaking, this theoretical compatibility with ecocentrism increases as we move from ecosocialism, on the one hand, to ecoanarchism and ecofeminism, on the other. Nonetheless, I argue that the post-Marxist version of ecosocialism provide an important corrective to what may be described as some of the

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86. For a general discussion of the relationship of environmentalism to political theory, see P. R. Hay, "Ecological Values and Western Political Traditions: From Anarchism to Fascism," Politics (U. K.) 8 (1988): 22-29.

"utopian excesses" of ecoanarchism, particularly in underscoring the advantages of retaining a democratically accountable state. In this respect, despite the concerted emancipatory critique of the modern liberal/welfare democratic state, I argue that, from an ecocentric perspective, the case for its circumvention or abolition is misguided, or at the very least, considerably premature.

These various debates within emancipatory ecopolitical theory are examined in Part II. In the following chapter I propose to clarify and defend the ecocentric perspective that will inform my exploration of this new terrain of Green political thought. I will then, in the remaining chapter of Part I, discuss and clarify the socio-historical context in which emancipatory ecopolitical thought has arisen by relating it to the new forms of social opposition that have emerged in Western industrialized countries.

Chapter 2

Exploring Environmentalism: Why Ecocentrism?

Introduction

Although "ecology" is the first of the four pillars of Green politics, there is a diversity of views among Green theorists as to its meaning, scope, and political consequences. As I argued in Chapter 1, the most fundamental division over the meaning of this principle is the division between an anthropocentric and an ecocentric ecological orientation. However, these two orientations merely represent the opposing poles of a wide spectrum of differing orientations toward nature. In this chapter, I will be examining some of the major positions that fall between these two poles. In particular, I will be drawing on recent work in environmental philosophy to provide an overview and discussion of the major streams of environmentalism. This discussion will also provide the conceptual tools that will enable me to evaluate the particular kind and degree of anthropocentrism or ecocentrism that is manifest (or latent) in the various emancipatory ecopolitical theories to be examined in Part II. This chapter will also outline the case against anthropocentrism and address some of the more common criticisms and misunderstandings that are often levelled against, or associated with, the ecocentric perspective that is adopted in this inquiry.

My main concern in this chapter is to distinguish, explain, and defend the normative framework that will inform my political inquiry in Part II. It is, of course, impossible to prove that one kind of normative framework or set of values is true or false in the way in which one can attempt to prove the truth or falsity of an empirical statement or a mathematical theorem. Rather, an interpretive inquiry such as this is necessarily concerned with determining what kind of normative framework or set of values is the most plausible and appropriate candidate with respect to the problem under discussion.[1] As Fox points out, to say that this is "the best that we can do" - as

1. I am grateful for discussions with Warwick Fox in which he has stressed the significance of the criteria of plausibility and appropriateness in normative inquiry.

if values are a poor relation to scientific facts - is to misunderstand the nature of normative argument. Rather, critical discussion of competing values or norms is the only way in which one can hope to discover the most plausible and appropriate values by which to live.[2]

Major Streams of Environmentalism[3]

In presenting the following overview of the major streams of environmentalism, I have drawn heavily on the pioneering typologies of environmentalism developed by John Rodman and, more recently, Warwick Fox, who elaborates the most exhaustive classificatory scheme in the ecophilsophical literature.[4] The concern of these thinkers has been to characterize the major

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See also Fox's "New Philosophical Directions in Environmental Decision-Making," ms. 1990 (in preparation). See also Ken Wilber, Eye to Eye: The Quest for the New Paradigm (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1983), Chapters 1 and 2, for a very clear and succinct discussion of the differences between empiric-analytic inquiry and hermeneutic or interpretive inquiry (which includes normative or ethical inquiry), and Jurgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interest, trans. Jeremy Shapiro (London: Heinemann, 1972), p. 314 (Habermas's ideas are critically examined in Chapter 5).

2. Fox, personal discussions.

3. Although the phrase "streams of environmentalism" is now in fairly common usage, I first came across it in Bill Devall's 1979 manuscript "Streams of Environmentalism." A thoroughly revised version of this manuscript appeared as two papers: William B. Devall, "Reformist Environmentalism," Humboldt Journal of Social Relations 6 (1979): 129-57; and Bill Devall, "The Deep Ecology Movement," Natural Resources Journal 20 (1980): 299-322.

4. John Rodman, "Theory and Practice in the Environmental Movement: Notes Towards an Ecology of Experience," in The Search for Absolute Values in a Changing World: Proceedings of the Sixth International Conference on the Unity of the Sciences, vol 1 (San Francisco: The International Cultural Foundation, 1978), pp. 45-56; Rodman, "Four Forms of Ecological Consciousness Reconsidered," in Ethics and the Environment, eds. Donald Scherer and Thomas Attig (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: 1983), pp. 82-92; Warwick Fox, "Ways of Thinking Environmentally (and Some Brief Comments on their Implications for Acting Educationally)," in Thinking Environmentally ... Acting Educationally: Proceedings of the Fourth National Conference of the Australian Association of Environmental Education, eds., J. Wilson, G. Di Chiro, and I. Robottom (Melbourne: Victorian Association for Environmental Education, 1986), pp. 21-29; Warwick Fox, Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism (Boston: Shambhala, 1990), forthcoming, Chapter 6 (all page citations refer to the prepublication ms). I have also drawn on the overview of environmentalism provided by Devall in "Reformist Environmentalism"; on John Livingston's critique of anthropocentrism in The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1981), especially Chapter 2; on J. Baird Callicott's comparison of Animal Liberation with Leopold's land ethic in "Animal Liberation: A Triangular Affair," Environmental

arguments that underpin, and the problems associated with, different environmental positions in order to distinguish and defend an "ecological sensibility" as the basis for a general environmental ethic (Rodman) or a similar, but more detailed, "transpersonal ecology" approach to ecophilosophy (Fox). Whereas Rodman has sought to crystalise the major currents in the history of the environmental movement in order to uncover their complexities and ambiguities, Fox has developed a more general, analytical map that is intended to provide a close to exhaustive categorization of the range of ecophilosophical positions (i.e., whether or not they are represented by a particular historical movement).[5] My approach here will be primarily historical since my main concern is to relate clusters of particular environmental ideas to particular movements and to point out the contribution of, ambiguities in, and potential for alliance between these various movements. Above all, I am concerned to identify the major currents of contemporary environmentalism that have fed, in varying degrees, into the central "ecological pillar" of Green politics. It is very important to undertake such a survey in a political inquiry of this kind for the simple reason that most Green political theorists (as distinct from ecophilosophers) have so far paid insufficient attention to articulating the ambit of the central pillar of ecology in any kind of detail or to exploring the social and political implications of different kinds of environmental postures.

Ethics 2 (1980): 311-38; and on John Rodman's critique of Animal Liberation in "The Liberation of Nature?," Inquiry 20 (1970): 83-131.

5. Rodman's typology (as presented in "Four Forms") is (i) resource conservation, (ii) wilderness preservation, (iii) moral extensionism, and (iv) ecological sensibility. Fox, on the other hand, (in Transpersonal Ecology, Chapters 6 and 7) distinguishes between (i) instrumental value theory, (ii) intrinsic value theory, and (iii) transpersonal ecology. Fox subdivides instrumental value theory approaches into (i) unrestrained exploitation and expansionism, (ii) resource conservation and development, and (iii) resource preservation. He subdivides intrinsic value theory approaches into (i) ethical sentientism, (ii) biological ethics, (iii) autopoietic ethics (which includes ecosystem ethics and ecosphere - or "Gaian" - ethics), and (iv) cosmic purpose ethics. In contrast to these axiological (i.e., value theory) approaches, transpersonal ecology represents a psychological approach to ecophilosophy. A considerably earlier version of Fox's categories (in "Ways of Thinking Environmentally") has also been used by Alan Drengson in "Protecting the Environment, Protecting Ourselves: Reflections on the Philosophical Dimension," in Environmental Ethics, vol. 2, ed. R. Bradley and S. Duguro (Vancouver: Simon Fraser University, 1989), pp. 35-52, see p. 44.

Moving from the anthropocentric toward the ecocentric poles, the major positions that I will be discussing are Resource Conservation, Human Welfare Ecology, Preservationism, Animal Liberation, and Ecocentrism.[6] This spectrum represents a general movement from an economistic and instrumental environmental ethic towards a comprehensive and holistic environmental ethic that is able to accommodate the concerns of human centred environmentalists (for, say, a sustainable "natural resource base," a safe environment, or "urban amenity") while at the same time respecting the integrity of other life-forms. However, since part of my concern is to draw out the ambiguities in, and the potential for forming alliances between, some of these historical currents of environmentalism, the general movement from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism will not appear as a strict linear progression. For example, some of the arguments for Preservationism are more ecocentric than those for Animal Liberation while other Preservationist arguments represent a variation of some of the arguments used by the Human Welfare Ecology stream.

This general overview of environmentalism will also help to explain how some currents of environmentalism have had more influence in some countries than others and how this has influenced both the nature and goals of the Green movement and the expression of Green theory in those countries. For example, the Human Welfare Ecology stream has played a relatively more prominent role in Europe whereas the Preservationist stream has had more influence in "New World" regions such as North America and Australasia (where there are considerably more areas of wilderness to preserve!).[7] This has given rise to different emphases in Green theory and practice in those regions. Moreover, I will show in later chapters how those environmental streams clustering toward the anthropocentric end of the spectrum can be easily accommodated within most modern political traditions whereas those

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6. I do not discuss the most blatant anthropocentric environmental position, which Fox characterizes as unrestrained exploitation and expansionism, since no emancipatory ecopolitical theorist would support this position.

7. This point is developed further in Robyn Eckersley, "Green Theory and Practice in the Old and New Worlds: A Comparative Perspective," 1990, ms.

clustering toward the ecocentric end cannot easily mesh with these traditions, at least not in the absence of major theoretical revisions.

It is interesting to note, by way of comparison, that Samuel Hays, in his major historical survey of environmental politics in the United States from 1955-1985, distinguishes between what he calls the older conservation movement (concerned with the scientific management of physical resources - this mostly corresponds with my Resource Conservation category) and the new environmental movement (a post-World War II, popular movement concerned with the pursuit of "environmental quality").[8] Hays describes the new movement as encompassing three interrelated concerns - Beauty (i.e., aesthetic quality), Health (broadly construed to include safety and well being in the domestic environment), and Permanence (i.e., ecological balance and sustainability). Although there is a considerable resonance between these three categories and my Preservationism, Human Welfare Ecology, and Resource Conservation categories respectively, there are also important differences. In particular, Hays does not discuss the Animal Liberation movement and he pays scant attention to the philosophical and political implications of the critique of anthropocentrism that has developed out of the Preservationist and Animal Liberation movements (a critique that has been taken up and considerably developed by ecocentric theorists).

There is, of course, a considerable overlap between the various major currents of environmentalism to be discussed in terms of their practical upshot. However, I hope to show that these currents vary markedly in their comprehensiveness and philosophical basis and that this has important implications when it comes to deciding which perspective (or synthesis of perspectives) is best able to provide the theoretical underpinnings for the central ecological pillar in Green political thought.

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8. Samuel P. Hays, Beauty, Health and Permanence: Environmental Politics in the United States, 1955-1985 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), see Chapter 1.

(i) Resource Conservation

Although the idea of conservation, in the sense of the "prudent husbanding" of nature's bounty, can be traced back as far as Cicero and the Old and New Testaments, its 20th century scientific and utilitarian manifestation is intricately bound up with the rise of modern science from the 16th century.[9] Those who have inquired into the historical roots of the modern conservation doctrine have generally traced its popularization in North America to Gifford Pinchot, the first chief of the U. S. Forest Service, who has been described by Devall as the "prototype figure in the [conservation] movement."[10] Central to Pinchot's notion of conservation was the elimination of waste, an idea that the environmental historian Samuel P. Hays has dubbed "the gospel of efficiency" lying at the heart of the doctrine of conservation.[11] Yet Pinchot's ideas were also deeply imbued with the ethos of the Progressive era to which he belonged; indeed, in his book The Fight for Conservation, he identified "development" as the first principle of conservation, with "the prevention of waste" and development "for the benefit of the many, and not merely the profit of the few" forming the second and third principles respectively.[12] Moreover, as McConnell

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9. See Clarence J. Glacken, "The Origins of the Conservation Philosophy," in Readings in Resource Management and Conservation, ed. Ian Burton and Robert W. Kates (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1965), pp. 158-63 at p. 158.

10. Devall, "Reform Environmentalism," p. 140. See also Grant McConnell, "The Environmental Movement: Ambiguities and Meanings," Natural Resources Journal 11 (1971): 427-35; Samuel P. Hays, Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959); and Rodman, "Four Forms." Glacken, on the other hand, has cited the geographer George Perkins Marsh's treatise Man and Nature: or Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action (1864) as providing the first systematic treatise establishing the need to carefully husband the lands of the New World so as to avoid disturbing "the balance of nature." (See Glacken, "The Origins of the Conservation Philosophy," p. 161.)

11. Devall has described Pinchot's autobiography Breaking New Ground (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1947) as "a succinct statement of the values of this reformist movement and a description of the origins of the U. S. Forest Service, one of the largest resources development agencies in the world" ("Reform Environmentalism," p. 141).

12. Pinchot, The Fight for Conservation (New York: Doubleday Page and Co., 1910), p. 46. McConnell notes that the principle of development was "in part a reply to those critics who claimed that the goal of conservationists was the mere 'withholding of resources for future generations,' a form of hoarding." However he also notes that, in any event, the principle of development was one to which "the movement under Pinchot's guidance was deeply committed." Grant McConnell, "The Conservation Movement: Past and Present," in Readings in Resource Management and

observes, it was taken for granted that the principle of waste prevention meant "maximising output of economic goods per unit of human labour."[13] According to Devall, the Pinchot-led conservation movement in the United States helped to "professionalize 'resource management'" and further the centralization of power in large public bodies (such as the U.S. Forest Service) based on principles of "scientific management."[14]

Rodman has labelled this modern scientific and utilitarian approach to land management the "Resource Conservation" movement and has described it as "an unconstrained total-use approach, whose upshot is to leave nothing in its natural condition (for that would be a kind of 'waste,' and waste should be eliminated)."[15] Similarly, Devall and Fox refer to this perspective as the "Resource Conservation and Development" perspective in order to underscore the point that waste meant not only the inefficient use of natural resources but also their nonutilization.

The Resource Conservation perspective may be seen as the first major stop, as it were, as one moves away from an unrestrained development approach. Not surprisingly, it is the least controversial stream of contemporary environmentalism - indeed, it has become somewhat of a foe to more radical streams of environmentalism. This perspective conforms to an essentially utilitarian framework that seeks the "greatest good for the greatest number" (including future generations) by reducing waste and inefficiency in the exploitation and consumption of nonrenewable "natural resources" (e.g., oil) and ensuring a maximum sustainable yield in respect of renewable resources (e.g., fisheries, soil, crops, and timber).[16] As

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Conservation, ed. by Ian Burton and Robert W. Kates (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1965), pp. 189-201 at p. 191.

13. McConnell, "The Environmental Movement," p. 430.

14. Devall, "Reform Environmentalism," p. 140.

15. Rodman, "Four Forms," p. 83.

16. I am using the term "utilitarian" here in the Pinchot sense to mean the wise-use and management of resources to ensure "the greatest good for the greatest number of people." This is not, strictly speaking, part of the modern school of utilitarian moral philosophy founded by Bentham (referred to below in my discussion on Animal Liberation) since Bentham's hedonistic (i.e., pleasure maximising and pain minimising) principles were extended to all sentient creatures.

such, it is a perspective that is inextricably tied to the production process and, by virtue of that fact, necessarily regards the nonhuman world in use-value terms. This is reflected, inter alia, in the language used by adherents of this stream of environmentalism; after all, "resources" are, as Neil Evernden points out, "indices of utility to industrial society. They say nothing at all of experiential value or intrinsic worth."[17] Similarly, Laurence Tribe has argued that to treat human material satisfaction as the only legitimate referent of environmental policy analysis and "resource management" leads to "the dwarfing of soft-variables" such as the aesthetic, recreational, psychological, and spiritual needs of humans and the different needs of other life-forms.[18] While the recognition of the use-value of the nonhuman world must form a necessary part of any comprehensive environmental ethic, Resource Conservation is too limited a perspective to form the exclusive criterion of even a thoroughly anthropocentrically based environmental ethic.

(ii) Human Welfare Ecology

Like the Resource Conservation stream, the movement for a safe, clean, and pleasant human environment has a long pedigree, although the pace, reach, and expectations of such concern has grown considerably since the onset of the industrial revolution, and even more so since the 1960s. Whereas the labour movement had been in the forefront of the early wave of demands for a safer and more agreeable work environment (and Engels' classic 1845 critique of the conditions of the Victorian working class must be seen as a major milestone in the development of this movement), the late 20th century bearers of this stream have increasingly been citizens, consumers, and "householders" rather than waged employees.[19] This is

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17. Neil Evernden, "The Environmentalist's Dilemma," in The Paradox of Environmentalism, ed. Neil Evernden (Downsview, Ontario: Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, 1984): 7-17 at p. 10. See also Livingston, The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation, pp. 43-46.

18. Laurence Tribe, "Ways Not to Think About Plastic Trees: New Foundations for Environmental Law," The Yale Law Journal 83 (1974): 1315-48. See also Livingston, The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation, pp. 24-34.

19. Friedrich Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England, trans. and ed. W. O. Henderson and W. H. Chaloner, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971).

reflected in the increasing role played by women in urban ecological protest and in the changing sites of political struggle - from the factory to the household, street, shopping mall, and local municipal government. That Human Welfare Ecology protest may appear today to be a peculiarly late 20th century phenomenon is attributable as much to the rapid escalation in urban and agricultural environmental problems since the Second World War as to the emergence of "postmaterial" values borne by the so-called "new middle class."[20] The accumulation of toxic chemicals or "intractable wastes"; the intensification of ground, air, and water pollution generally; the growth in new "diseases of affluence" (e.g., heart disease, cancer); the growth in urban and coastal high rise development; the dangers of nuclear plants and nuclear wastes; the growth in the nuclear arsenal; and the problem of global warming and the thinning of the ozone layer have posed increasing threats to human survival, safety, and well-being.

The goals of the Human Welfare Ecology stream for a cleaner, safer, and more pleasing human environment are relatively straightforward and represent a more generalized form of prudence and enlightened self-interest than the Resource Conservation stream - indeed they provide an important challenge to the narrow, economistic focus of Resource Conservationists. Whereas the Resource Conservation movement has been primarily concerned with improving economic productivity by achieving the maximum sustainable yield of "natural resources" the major preoccupation of the Human Welfare Ecology movement has been the health, safety, and general amenity of the urban and agricultural environments - a concern that is often encapsulated in the term "environmental quality."[21] Expressed slightly differently, the Resource Conservation stream may be seen as primarily concerned

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20. On the rise of post-material values, see Ronald Inglehart, The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977) and Inglehart, "Post-Materialism in an Environment of Insecurity," The American Political Science Review 75 (1981): 880-900. For a critical discussion of Inglehart's thesis see Robyn Eckersley, "Green Politics and the New Class: Selfishness or Virtue?" Political Studies 37 (1989): 205-23. See also Hays, Beauty, Health and Permanence, pp. 34-35.

21. Livingston, The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation, pp. 34-41.

with the waste and depletion of natural resources whereas the Human Welfare Ecology stream may be seen as primarily concerned with the degradation or state of health and resilience of the general physical and social environment. For the Human Welfare Ecology stream, then, "sustainable development" means not merely sustaining the natural resources base but also sustaining human health and security. In focussing on both the physical and social limits to growth, Human Welfare Ecology has done much to draw attention to those "soft variables" neglected by the Resource Conservation perspective, such as the health, amenity, recreational, and psychological needs of human communities.

More significantly, the Human Welfare Ecology stream, unlike the Resource Conservation stream, has been highly critical of economic growth and the idea that science and technology alone can deliver us from the ecological crisis (although it has, of course, been dependent on the findings of ecological science to mount its case). Indeed, the kind of ecological perspective that has informed this stream of environmentalism is encapsulated in Barry Commoner's "four laws of ecology": everything is connected to everything else, everything must go somewhere, nature knows best (i.e., any major human intervention in a natural system is likely to be detrimental to that system), and there is no such thing as a free lunch.[22] These popularly expressed ecological insights have challenged the technological optimism of modern society and the confident belief that, in time, we can successfully manage all our large-scale interventions in natural systems without any negative consequences for ourselves. The realization that there is no "away" where we can dump our garbage, toxic and nuclear wastes, and other kinds of pollution has given rise to calls for a new stewardship ethic - that we must protect and nurture the biological support system upon which we are dependent. Practically, this has led to widespread calls for "appropriate technology" and "soft" energy paths, organic agriculture, alternative medicine, public transport, recycling, and, more generally, a revaluation of human needs and a search for more ecologically benign lifestyles.

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22. Barry Commoner, The Closing Circle: Nature, Man and Technology (New York: Bantam, 1972), pp. 29-44.

Since it is in urban areas that we find the greatest concentration of population, pollution, industrial and occupational hazards, traffic, dangerous technologies, planning and development conflicts, and hazardous wastes, it is hardly surprising that cities and their hinterlands have provided the major locale and focus of political agitation for the Human Welfare Ecology stream. Nor is it surprising that Human Welfare Ecology has been the strongest current of environmentalism in Green politics in the most heavily industrialized and domesticated regions of the West, most notably Europe. In particular, the many different popular environmental protests or "citizen's initiatives" in West Germany that provided the major impetus to the formation of Die Grunen have primarily been urban ecological protests falling within this general rubric. Not surprisingly, the ecological pillar in Die Grunen's platform is generally couched in the language of Human Welfare Ecology.[23]

By virtue of its primary concern for human welfare in the domesticated environment, however, this stream has generally mounted its case on the basis of an anthropocentric perspective. That is, the public justification given for environmental reforms by Human Welfare Ecology activists has tended to appeal to the enlightened self-interest of the human community (e.g., for our survival, for our children, for our future generations, for our health and amenity). Indeed, the Human Welfare Ecology stream has no need to go any further than this in order to make its case: it is enough to point out that "we must look after nature because it looks after us." Moreover, defenders of this perspective can say to their ecocentric critics that Human Welfare Ecology reforms would, in any event, directly improve the well-being of the nonhuman community as well. Why, they ask, should we challenge the public and lose the support of politicians with perplexing and off-beat ideas like "nature for its own sake" when we can achieve substantially the same ends as those sought by ecocentric theorists on the basis of our own acceptable anthropocentric arguments? The ecocentric rejoinder, however, is that if we restrict our perspective to a Human

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23. Die Grunen, Programme of the German Green Party (London: Heretic Books, 1983), p. 7. Concern for the protection of other species can, however, be found at pp. 34-35.

Welfare Ecology perspective we can provide no protection to those species that are of no present or potential use or interest to humankind. At best wildlife might "emerge as a second-generation [i.e., derivative] beneficiary" from Human Welfare Ecology reforms.[24] More generally, an anthropocentric framework is also likely to wind up reinforcing attitudes that are detrimental to the achievement of a comprehensive environmental reform in the long run because human interests will always systematically trump the interests of the nonhuman world.[25] As Fox puts it, employing only anthropocentric arguments for the sake of expediency might win the occasional environmental battle in the short term. However, in the long term "one is contributing to losing the ecological war by reinforcing the cultural perception that what is valuable in the nonhuman world is valuable only insofar as it is valuable to humans."[26]

(iii) Preservationism

If the essence of the Resource Conservation stream is the "wise-use" of "natural resources," and the essence of the Human Welfare Ecology stream is the health, amenity, and safety of the domesticated environment, then the essence of the early Preservationist stream may be described as reverence, in the sense of the aesthetic and spiritual appreciation of wilderness (i.e., nonhuman nature that has not, or only marginally, been domesticated by humans).[27] In North American environmental history, the conflict between Gifford Pinchot and the U. S. Forest Service, on the one hand, and John Muir and the Sierra Club, on the other hand, is generally taken as the archetypical example of the differences between Resource Conservation and Preservation, a difference that came to a head in the battle over

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24. Livingston, The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation, p. 42.

25. For a similar discussion, see Evernden, "The Environmentalist's Dilemma."

26. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, p. 304.

27. On the distinction between Resource Conservation and Preservationism, see Rodman, "Four Forms," p. 84.

Hetch Hetchy.[28] In short, whereas Pinchot was concerned to conserve nature for development, Muir's concern was to preserve nature from development.[29]

The precedent for the reservation of large wilderness areas was set in the latter half of the 19th century, the most significant milestone being the designation of over two million acres of northwestern Wyoming as Yellowstone National Park in 1872. According to Nash, this designation was "the world's first instance of large-scale wilderness preservation in the public interest."[30] However, similar developments were also occurring in Australia; the eighteen thousand acre Royal National Park, near Sydney (set aside in 1879 "for the use of the public forever as a national park"), is often cited as the second oldest national park.[31] Whereas the early reservations were made primarily in order to preserve "scenery" and provide recreational facilities for public use, the 20th century has witnessed a considerable broadening of the case for preservation along with its base of popular support.

It is noteworthy that, whereas wilderness was once feared by the early European colonists in New World regions such as Australasia and North America as a hostile force to be tamed, to an increasing number of Westerners wilderness has become, for a complex range of reasons, a subject of reverence, enlightenment, and a locus of tangible and symbolic values both threatened and new. The recent success of

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28. This conflict concerned the building of a dam at Hetch Hetchy (a canyon formed by the Tuolumne River in Yosemite national park), with Pinchot arguing for the economic and public benefits of the dam in providing a much needed water supply to the inhabitants of San Francisco and Muir arguing that Hetch Hetchy was a holy place that must be protected from "desecration" at any cost. See Rodman, "Four Forms," and Roderick Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, 3rd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

29. On the difference between conservation and preservation, see John Passmore, Man's Responsibility for Nature: Ecological Problems and Western Traditions, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth, 1980), p. 73.

30. Nash, Wilderness and the American Mind, p. 108.

31. J. G. Mosley, "Toward a History of Conservation in Australia," in Australia as Human Setting, ed. Amos Rapaport (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1972), pp. 136-54 at p. 148. It appears that Australia was the first country to use the name "national park," although the United States was the first to reserve a large area of wilderness. As Nash puts it, "the United States (in fact) and Australia (in name) both invented the national park." See Roderick Nash, "The Confusing Birth of National Parks," Michigan Quarterly Review 19 (1980): 216-26 at p. 226.

the Tasmanian Wilderness Society's campaign to "save" the Franklin river from a proposed dam by the Hydro-Electric Commission of Tasmania is one of the latest in a series of preservationist campaigns that have drawn support from a growing wellspring of popular sentiment and concern for the flourishing of pristine wilderness.[32] Indeed, it is arguably the campaigns for wilderness preservation, more than any other environmental campaigns, that have generated the most radical philosophical challenges to stock assumptions concerning our place in the scheme of things, thereby forcing theorists to confront the question of the moral standing of the nonhuman world. Despite John Muir's pious and outmoded vocabulary, his public defence of "wild nature" has made a lasting impression on the modern environmental imagination:

> The world we are told was made for man. A presumption that is totally unsupported by the facts ... Nature's object in making animals and plants might possibly be first of all the happiness of each one of them, not the creation of all for the happiness of one. Why ought man to value himself as more than an infinitely small composing unit of the one great unit of creation, and what creature of all that the Lord has taken the pains to make is less essential to the grand completeness of that unit?[33]

The link between Muir's particular pantheistic world-view and the ecocentric philosophy of more recent times is widely acknowledged although there are important differences. Rodman, for example, has argued that Muir's egalitarian orientation toward other species was "faint in comparison to the religious/esthetic theme" in his life and writings - and that an ethic that is primarily based on awe has significant limitations.[34] Insofar as wilderness appreciation has developed into a cult in search of sublime settings for "peak experiences" or simply places of rest, recreation, and aesthetic delight - "tonics" for jaded Western souls - it tends to converge with the Resource Conservation and Human Welfare Ecology positions in offering yet another

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32. The assertion of an ecocentric/biocentric ethic was central to this campaign. See Gary Easthope and Geoff Holloway, "Wilderness as the Sacred: The Franklin River Campaign," in Environmental Politics in Australia and New Zealand, ed. by Peter Hay, Robyn Eckersley, and Geoff Holloway (Hobart: Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, 1989), pp. 189-201.

33. Stephen Fox, John Muir and His Legacy (Boston: Little Brown, 1981), pp. 52-53.

34. Rodman, "Theory and Practice," p. 51, and "Four Forms," pp. 84-86.

kind of human-centred justification for restraining development. Moreover, this kind of preservationism has sometimes been unduly selective in that it has traditionally tended to single out those places that are aesthetically appealing according to Western cultural mores (e.g., pristine lofty mountains, grand canyons, and wild rivers). These areas are often considered holier and therefore more worthy of being "saved" than places that lack the requisite grandeur or sublime beauty (e.g., wetlands and degraded farm land) - even though the latter may be more ecologically significant or contain threatened species. This trend has been gradually reversed, however, as the preservationist movement has become more ecologically informed and flowered into what I call "ecocentric environmentalism" (this more comprehensive stream of environmentalism is explained and discussed below).

Finally, from an ecological point of view, it is self-defeating to focus exclusively on setting aside pockets of pristine wilderness while ignoring the growing problems of overpopulation and pollution since these problems will sooner or later impact upon the remaining fragments of wild nature. As Rodman has perceptively observed, "the logic of preserving wilderness and wildlife on artificial islands surrounded by the sea of civilization seems to involve its own mode of destruction."[35] In this respect, the Human Welfare Ecology movement is an essential complement to the Preservationist movement, as most contemporary wilderness activists now recognize. This is because most of the environmental reforms pursued by Human Welfare Ecology activists help, albeit indirectly, to secure the ecological integrity of wilderness areas (e.g., by minimising pollution, conserving energy, and recycling resources).

More recently, environmental philosophers have pointed to the wide range of anthropocentric utilitarian arguments that have been advanced in favour of wilderness preservation (some of which have already been canvassed above). Fox provides the most exhaustive classification of these arguments to date.[36] Building on

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35. Rodman, "The Liberation of Nature?," p. 112.

36. See the section on "Resource Preservation" in Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, Chapter 6.

and adding to work by William Godfrey-Smith and George Sessions, Fox identifies nine kinds of argument for preserving the nonhuman world on the basis of its instrumental value. He refers to these as the "life-support," "early warning system," "laboratory," "silo," "gymnasium," "art gallery," "cathedral," "monument," and "psychogenetic" arguments. He also divides these nine arguments into five general categories of argument that emphasize the "physical nourishment value," the "informational value," the "experiential value," the "symbolic instructional value," and the "psychological nourishment value" of the nonhuman world to humans.

It is easy to see how many of the more tangible arguments for the preservation of wilderness can be quite persuasive politically, especially the more economically inclined arguments such as those that refer to the recreational potential of wilderness or those that demonstrate the importance of maintaining genetic diversity to provide new applications in medicine and agriculture. However, it is important not to underestimate the political potency of some of the less tangible arguments for wilderness preservation. For example, the preservation of wild nature is seen by many as both a symbolic act of resistance against urban and cultural monoculture and the materialism and greed of consumer society and a defence (both real and symbolic) of a certain cluster of values such as freedom, spontaneity, community, diversity, and, in some cases, national identity.[37] Many of these sentiments have been forcefully expressed in the observations of the novelist and Franklin River blockader James McQueen who wrote in his tribute to the Franklin campaign that the Franklin was "not just a river" but rather

> ... the epitome of all the lost forests, all the submerged lakes, all the tamed rivers, all the extinguished species. It is threatened by the same mindless beast that has eaten our past, is eating our present, and threatens to eat our future: that civil beast of mean ambitions and broken promises and hedged bets and tawdry profits.[38]

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37. For example, Brian Norton has argued that when "we manipulate and control natural processes, we strike at our own freedom, symbolically and actually" (see Brian Norton, "Sand Dollar Psychology," The Washington Post Magazine, 1 June, 1986, pp. 10-14 at p. 14) while Mark Sagoff has argued that wilderness is part of America's heritage and forms an important symbol of the nation's character and history (see Mark Sagoff, "On Preserving the Natural Environment," The Yale Law Journal 84 [1974]: 205-67).

Part of the political potency of arguments of this latter kind lies in the fact that the defence of wild nature is at the same time a defence of a certain cluster of values of social consequence, that is, they represent not only a defence of biological diversity and of "letting things be" but also a renewed assault on the one-dimensionality of technological society. In this respect, Thoreau's oft-quoted dictum - "in wilderness is the preservation of the world" - may be seen as a taking on a both an ecological and political meaning.

While many of the arguments discussed above are essentially instrumental and anthropocentric (since they are primarily concerned with defending the material and experiential benefits of wilderness to humankind), some also address deep-seated questions concerning human identity in a way that has invited a shift in our general orientation toward the world, both human and nonhuman. This is because examining our relationship to other life-forms tells us something about ourselves - about our modern character and the kinds of values and dispositions that our society encourages or discourages.[39] The most radical argument to emerge from this kind of ecophilosophical soul searching - an argument foreshadowed by Muir - is that we should not only value nature for its instrumental value to us but also for its intrinsic value (i.e., for its own sake, regardless of its instrumental value to us). It is in this particular respect that the Preservationist stream of environmentalism may be seen as the harbinger of ecocentrism.

(iv) Animal Liberation

Alongside the three major streams of environmentalism discussed above is a fourth stream that has developed relatively independently and has its origins in the various "humane" societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals that emerged in the 18th and 19th centuries. The modern Animal Liberation movement, unlike the

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38. See James McQueen, The Franklin: Not Just a River (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin, 1983), p. 2.

39. See Thomas E. Hill, Jr., "Ideals of Human Excellence and Preserving Natural Environments," Environmental Ethics 5 (1983): 211-24. Hill suggests that indifference to nonsentient nature, while not a moral vice, is nonetheless "likely to reflect either ignorance, a self-importance, or a lack of self-acceptance which we must overcome to have proper humility" (p. 222).

Resource Conservation, Human Welfare Ecology, and Preservation movements, has from its inception consistently championed the moral worthiness of certain members of the nonhuman world.[40] However, while the Animal Liberation movement might have been one of the first streams of environmentalism to have stepped unambiguously over what might be called the "great anthropocentric divide," such a step, as many ecophilosophical critics have recently pointed out, was not as momentous as it might first appear. In the view of these critics the philosophical foundations of the Animal Liberation movement are unduly limited and fall well short of a rounded ecocentric world-view.[41]

The popular case for the protection of the rights of animals is a relatively straightforward revival of the arguments of the modern utilitarian school of moral philosophy founded by Jeremy Bentham. In enlarging the conventional domain of ethical theory, Bentham had argued that human obligation ought to extend to all beings capable of experiencing pleasure and pain, regardless of what other characteristics they may possess or lack. The important question for Bentham in respect of whether beings were morally considerable was "not, Can they reason? nor, Can they talk? but, Can they Suffer?"[42]

In drawing on Bentham's moral philosophy, the contemporary animal rights theorist Peter Singer has argued in favour of the moral principle of equal consideration (as distinct from treatment) of the interests of all sentient beings

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40. I have used the description "Animal Liberation movement" in view of the popularity of Peter Singer's influential defence of the rights of animals in Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for Our Treatment of Animals (New York: Avon Books, 1975). See also Peter Singer, ed., In Defence of Animals (London: Basil Blackwell, 1985).

41. Rodman, "The Liberation of Nature?"; Paul Shepard, "Animal Rights and Human Rites," North American Review, Winter 1974, pp. 35-41; Tribe, "Ways Not to Think About Plastic Trees," pp. 1344-45; J. Baird Callicott, "Animal Liberation"; Rodman, "Four Forms," pp. 86-88; John Livingston, "The Dilemma of the Deep Ecologist," in The Paradox of Environmentalism, ed. Neil Evernden (Downsview, Ontario: Faculty of Environmental Studies, York University, 1984), pp. 61-72; and Warwick Fox, "Towards a Deeper Ecology?" Habitat Australia, August 1985, pp. 26-28.

42. Jeremy Bentham, An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation (1789) Chapter 17, quoted by Singer, Animal Liberation, p. 8.

regardless of what kind of species they are.[43] The criterion of sentience is pivotal. For example, Singer has insisted that the "capacity for suffering and enjoyment is a prerequisite for having interests at all, a condition that must be satisfied before we can speak of interests in a [morally] meaningful way" - indeed, he has argued that the criterion of sentience it is the "only defensible boundary of concern for the interests of others."[44] (The question as to what is a sentient being is not always easy to determine. Singer has sought to show that there is ample evidence that mammals, birds, reptiles, fish and, to a lesser extent, crustaceans all feel pain. He concedes that determining the exact cut-off point is difficult but that "somewhere between a shrimp and an oyster seems as good a place to draw the line as any, and better than most."[45])

To Singer, then, it is morally irrelevant whether a being possesses such capacities as linguistic skills, self-consciousness, or the ability to enter into reciprocal agreements (which represent some of the usual kinds of justification given for according humans exclusive moral standing) if that being is otherwise sentient. In this respect, Singer has done much to expose the logical inconsistency in the practice of taking into account and protecting the interests of handicapped or immature humans such as brain damaged people, infants, or the senile, yet continuing to ignore the suffering imposed on nonhuman animals in such practices as "factory farming" and vivisection. After all, as Singer provocatively asks, if there are some

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43. In this general overview of the case for animal liberation, I have singled out the particular arguments of Peter Singer in his popular book Animal Liberation since this represents the classic, and still the most influential, defence of animal liberation. There are, however, other philosophical justifications for ascribing moral rights to nonhuman animals that do not rest on utilitarianism (although they still acknowledge the importance of sentience). For example, Tom Regan argues for the humane treatment of a more restrictive class of animals ("mentally normal mammals of a year or more") on the basis that they enjoy a mental life of their own and therefore possess "inherent value" and ought to be respected as having moral rights (see Tom Regan, The Case for Animal Rights [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983] and Regan, "Animal Rights, Human Wrongs," Environmental Ethics 2 [1980]: 99-120) while Stephen Clark places less emphasis on pain and more emphasis on the need to enable animals as well as humans to realize their special potentialities (see S. L. R. Clark, The Moral Status of Animals [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975]). For a comparison of Clark's and Singer's approach, see John Benson, "Duty and the Beast," Philosophy 53 (1978): 529-49.

44. Singer, Animal Liberation, pp. 8-9.

45. Ibid., pp. 178-79.

handicapped humans who are no more rational than nonhuman animals, then why not use them in scientific experimentation? By analogy with racism, Singer, following Richard Ryder, has called such discrimination against animals "speciesism" - "a prejudice or attitude of bias toward the interests of members of one's own species and against those of members of other species."[46]

The implication of Singer's argument is that, where practicable, we must avoid inflicting any suffering on sentient beings. Accordingly, supporters of Animal Liberation advocate the prohibition of the hunting and slaughtering of all sentient beings (the corollary of which is vegetarianism), the prohibition of vivisection, and the prohibition of "factory farming." Although Singer's major focus has been the abuse of domestic animals, his argument also provides a justification for the protection of the habitat of wild animals, fish, and birds. That is, forests and wetlands ought to be protected on the grounds that they are instrumentally valuable to sentient beings for their "comfort and well-being" in providing nesting sites, breeding habitat, and sustenance.

The attractiveness of Singer's method of argument is that it employs a familiar principle that is widely accepted (i.e., that pleasure is good and pain is bad) and then proceeds to logically press this rationale in such a way that those who accept the premise are forced to accept his conclusion. Moreover, the analogy with racism also underscores the point that the Animal Liberation movement is but the latest in a series of humanitarian or emancipatory movements that began with the anti-slavery campaigns and later broadened to include the anti-colonial and women's movements, all of which have sought to expose and eradicate discriminatory practices on behalf of oppressed groups. In this respect, it is presented as part of a praiseworthy trend of moral and political progress - as one more step along the path toward universal justice, or, as the environmental ethicist J. Baird Callicott has described it, "the next and most daring development of political liberalism."[47]

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46. Ibid., p. 7. Richard Ryder, Speciesism: The Ethics of Vivisection (Edinburgh: Scottish Society for the Prevention of Vivisection, 1974).

Ecocentric philosophers, however, have been critical of Singer's moral philosophy for regarding nonsentient beings as morally inconsequential. As Rodman has observed, Singer's philosophy leaves the rest of nature

> ... in a state of thinghood, having no intrinsic worth, acquiring instrumental value only as resources for the well-being of an elite of sentient beings. Homocentrist rationalism has widened out into a kind of zoocentrist sentientism.[48]

Trees, for example, are considered to be valuable only insofar as they provide habitat, can be turned into furniture, or otherwise rendered serviceable to the needs of sentient life-forms. To the extent that synthetic substitutes can be made to perform the services of nonsentient life-forms, then the latter will be rendered dispensible.

Some environmental philosophers have also mounted a more subtle critique of the Animal Liberation perspective. According to John Rodman, not only does this approach render nonsentient beings morally inconsequential but it also subtly degrades sentient nonhuman beings by regarding them as analogous to "defective" humans who likewise cannot fulfil any moral duties.[49] Rodman sees this tendency to regard sentient nonhumans as having the same standing as inferior human beings as analogous to dolphins regarding humans "as defective sea mammals who lack sonar capabilities."[50] The result is that the unique modes of existence and special capabilities of these nonhuman beings are overlooked.

A further criticism levelled against Singer's moral philosophy is that it is atomistic and therefore unsuitable for dealing with the complexities of environmental problems, which demand an understanding and recognition of not only the behaviour of whole species but also the interrelationships between different natural cycles,

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47. Callicott, "Animal Liberation," p. 313. See also Roderick Nash, "Rounding Out the American Revolution: Ethical Extensionism and the New Environmentalism," in Deep Ecology, ed. Michael Tobias (San Diego: Avant Books, 1985), pp. 170-81, and Roderick Frazier Nash, The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989).

48. Rodman, "The Liberation of Nature?," p. 91. See also Callicott, "Animal Liberation," p. 318.

49. Rodman, "Four Forms," see p. 87. See also Fox, "Towards a Deeper Ecology?" p. 27.

50. Rodman, "The Liberation of Nature?," p. 94.

systems, and populations. According to Rodman, the progressive extension model of ethics (which includes Christopher Stone's argument for the legal protection of the rights of nonsentient entities, discussed in the following section) tends

> ... to perpetuate the atomistic metaphysics that is so deeply imbedded in modern culture, locating intrinsic value only or primarily in individual persons, animals, plants, etc., rather than in communities or ecosystems, since individuals are our paradigmatic entities for thinking, being conscious, and feeling pain.[51]

Finally, critics have pointed to the tension between Singerian justice and an ecological perspective by noting that Animal Liberation, when pressed to its logical conclusion, would be obliged to convert all nonhuman animal carnivores to vegetarians, or, at the very least, replace predation in the food chain with some kind of "humane" alternative that protects, or at least minimises the suffering of, sentient prey. As Fox argues, besides representing "ecological lunacy," animal liberation

> ... would serve, in effect, to endorse the modern project of totally domesticating the nonhuman world. Moreover, it would also condemn as immoral those "primitive" cultures in which hunting is an important aspect of existence.[52]

Singer has in fact admitted that the existence of nonhuman carnivores poses a problem for the ethics of Animal Liberation. Despite this concession, he is still prepared to allow the modification of the dietary habits of at least some domestic animals in referring his readers to recipes for a vegetarian menu for their pets![53]

To conclude, then, Animal Liberation has mounted a compelling challenge to anthropocentrism in pointing to its many logical inconsistencies. However, Singer's criterion of moral considerability (i.e., sentience), while a relevant factor, is

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51. Rodman, "Four Forms," p. 85. See also Callicott, "Animal Liberation."

52. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, p. 314. Similarly, J. Baird Callicott describes the issue of predation as the "Achilles' heel" of the case for animal rights put forward by Tom Regan. He argues that while Regan "is not willing to embrace the implications of his theory regarding predators," others, such as Steve Sapontzis, have been more forthright. In particular, Sapontzis has argued that it would be a morally better world if there were no carnivores at all. See J. Baird Callicott, review of The Case for Animal Rights, by Tom Regan, Environmental Ethics 7 (1985): 365-75 at p. 371, and Steve S. Sapontzis, "Predation," Ethics and Animals 5 (1984): 27-36.

53. Singer, Animal Liberation, p. 238-39. In particular, Singer rejects the idea of policing nonhuman carnivores in the wild on the grounds that (i) any attempt to change ecological systems on a large scale would do more harm than good, and (ii) we ought not to claim dominion over other species: "Having given up the role of tyrant, we should not try to play Big Brother" (ibid). It should be noted, however, that these objections are ad hoc in that they do not flow from Singer's sentience criterion.

too limited and not sufficiently ecologically informed to provide the exclusive criterion of a comprehensive environmental ethics. As I show in the following section, ecocentric ethical theorists have identified broader, less "human analogous" and more ecologically relevant criteria to determine whether a being or entity has "interests" deserving of moral consideration.

(v) Ecocentrism

The contemporary social bearers of an ecocentric perspective may be loosely described as "radical environmentalists" or, following Naess's influential characterization, participants in the "deep ecology movement."[54] In many respects, this stream of ecocentric environmentalism may be seen as a more wide-ranging and more ecologically informed variant of Preservationism. Whereas the early Preservationists were primarily concerned to protect wilderness as sublime scenery and were motivated mainly by aesthetic and spiritual considerations, ecocentric environmentalists are concerned to protect threatened populations, species, habitats, and ecosystems wherever situated and irrespective of their use value or importance to humans. (This kind of concern is well illustrated by the activities of the international environmental organization Greenpeace.) In particular, ecocentric environmentalists strongly support the preservation of large tracts of wilderness as the best means of enabling the flourishing of a diverse nonhuman world. Accordingly, in what I have called the New World regions such as North America and Australasia (where significant areas of wilderness still remain), the greatest concentration of ecocentric activists is usually to be found in organizations, campaigns, or movements that promote the protection of wilderness. Two noteworthy examples here are the Earth First! movement in the United States and The Wilderness Society in Australia.

Much of the basic outline of an ecocentric perspective has already been foreshadowed in Chapter 1 and in the criticisms made of the streams of environmentalism discussed above. I now want to tie these threads together and

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54. Arne Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement. A Summary," Inquiry 16 (1973): 95-100.

present the perspective that will inform this inquiry into emancipatory ecopolitical thought. This perspective offers a more encompassing approach than any of those discussed above in that it (i) recognizes the full range of human interests in the nonhuman world; (ii) recognizes the interests of the nonhuman community; (iii) recognizes the interests of future generations of humans and nonhumans; and (iv) adopts a holistic rather than an atomistic perspective insofar as it values populations, species, ecosystems, and the ecosphere as well as individual organisms.

Now defenders of an Animal Liberation perspective might argue that their perspective is quite adequate to secure the protection of many non-sentient entities, such as ecosystems, and that for all practical purposes it is as good as an ecocentric perspective. This is because, as we saw in the previous section, if we attribute intrinsic value to all sentient beings, then we must also recognize whatever is instrumentally valuable to them (e.g., their habitats and food sources). This would provide a case for the protection of forests, wetlands, and any other habitat upon which sentient nonhuman beings depend for their survival and wellbeing. However, as we saw in the previous section, ecocentric theorists have argued that this kind of approach not only leaves the rest of nature in a state of "thinghood" - the only purpose of which is to service an elite of sentient beings - but that it is also too atomistic and, therefore, "unecological" in the way in which it distributes intrinsic value in the world. For example, this kind of approach would attribute equal intrinsic value and, hence, equal moral consideration to the individual members of a native species or an endangered species as it would to the individual members of an introduced species or an abundant species (assuming the degree of sentience of each species to be roughly equivalent). This approach to the distribution of intrinsic value means that it would be considered no worse to kill, say, twenty members of a native species than it would be to kill ("weed out") twenty members of an introduced, feral species; for the same reason, it would be considered no worse to kill the last twenty members of a sentient endangered species than it would be to kill twenty members of an equally sentient species that exists in plague proportions. Similarly, an Animal Liberation perspective would attribute the same value to the individual animals that inhabit a flourishing,

wild ecosystem as the equivalent number of domesticated or captive wild animals that might be managed by humans on a farm or in a zoo.

Even if one extends intrinsic value to all living organisms (i.e., animals, plants, and micro-organisms) the same general kinds of problems apply. This is because such an approach still remains atomistic (i.e., it only attributes intrinsic value to individual living organisms) and therefore does not extend any moral recognition to populations, species, ecosystems, and the ecosphere considered as entities in their own right. (I do not discuss a specifically "Life-based" stream of environmentalism in this survey of the major streams of environmentalism for the simple reason that, sociologically and politically speaking, this approach does not represent a major stream of environmentalism. Environmentalists who have moved beyond anthropocentrism tend, on the whole, to gravitate toward either the Animal Liberation approach or a straight-out ecocentric approach.)

In view of the above, it is clear that ecocentric theorists are concerned to develop an ecologically informed approach that is able to value (for their own sake) not just individual living organisms but also ecological entities and ecological relationships at different levels of aggregation, such as populations, species, ecosystems, and the ecosphere. What, then, does an ecocentric approach look like?[55]

There are many different ways of arguing for an ecocentric perspective. Examples include axiological (i.e., value theory) approaches that argue for the intrinsic value of all living entities as well as such "systemic" entities as populations, species, ecosystems, and the ecosphere; the psychological-cosmological approach that is being developed under the name of "deep" or, more recently, "transpersonal ecology"; certain Eastern philosophies such as Taoism and Buddhism that emphasize the interconnectedness of all phenomena and the importance of humility and compassion; and the animistic cosmologies of many indigenous peoples (such as the

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55. In the following discussion I draw on many of the categories and arguments presented by Fox in Transpersonal Ecology on the differences between intrinsic value theory approaches and psychological-cosmological approaches (these approaches are explained in the text). Fox provides the clearest and most exhaustive overview in the ecophilosophical literature of the different kinds of routes that may be taken in defending an ecocentric perspective.

North American Indians and the Australian Aborigines) who see and respect the nonhuman world as alive and enspirited.[56]

If we stay within the Western tradition for the purposes of this inquiry, then we can defend ecocentrism by employing either an intrinsic value theory approach or the psychological-cosmological of transpersonal ecology. Although I will show that the latter approach has the most in common with the kind of ecocentric emancipatory politics that is defended in this inquiry, it is also important to point out that there is at least one kind of intrinsic value theory approach that provides a sound alternative theoretical basis for ecocentrism. This approach is outlined by Fox under the name of "autopoietic ethics."

An autopoietic approach attributes intrinsic value to all entities that display the property of autopoiesis, which means "self-production" or "self-renewal" (from the Greek autos, "self," and poiein, "to produce").[57] Autopoietic entities are entities that are "primarily and continuously concerned with the regeneration of their own organizational activity and structure."[58] It is precisely this characteristic of self-production or self-renewal that distinguishes living entities from self-correcting machines that appear to operate in a purposive manner (such as guided missiles). In

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56. On intrinsic value theory approaches, see J. Baird Callicott, "The Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethic," in Companion to A Sand County Almanac, ed. J. Baird Callicott (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp. 186-217, and Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, Chapter 6; on deep/transpersonal ecology, see Bill Devall and George Sessions, Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered, (Layton, Utah: Gibbs M. Smith, 1985) and Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, Chapters 7 and 8; on Taoist and Buddhist approaches, see Ip Po-Keung, "Taoism and the Foundations of Environmental Ethics," Environmental Ethics 5 (1983): 335-43, and Andrew McLaughlin, "Images and Ethics of Nature," Environmental Ethics 7 (1985): 293-19; and on animistic cosmologies, see J. Donald Hughes, American Indian Ecology (El Paso, Texas: Texas Western Press, 1983) and J. Baird Callicott, "Traditional American Indian and Western European Attitudes Toward Nature: An Overview," Environmental Ethics 4 (1982): 293-318.

57. The concept of "autopoiesis" derives from the biological work of Francisco Varela, Humberto Maturana, and Ricardo Uribe. See Francisco J. Varela, Humberto R. Maturana, and Ricardo Uribe, "Autopoiesis: The Organization of Living Systems, Its Characterization and a Model," Biosystems 5 (1974): 187-96, and Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela, The Tree of Knowledge: The Biological Roots of Human Understanding (Boston: Shambhala, 1988). Fox is responsible for introducing this idea to the environmental philosophy literature (see Transpersonal Ecology, Chapter 6).

58. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, p. 288.

other words, "the primary product of the operations of living systems [as distinct from mechanical systems] is themselves, not something external to themselves."[59] In short, autopoietic processes are ends in themselves. As Fox explains,

> ... this amounts to the classical formulation of intrinsic value: by definition, any entity or process that is merely a means to an end has only an instrumental value whereas any entity or process that is an end in itself has an intrinsic value, and is therefore deserving of moral consideration.[60]

An autopoietic approach provides a sounder theoretical basis for ecocentrism than the ethical holism of Aldo Leopold's famous land ethic, which declares that "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it does otherwise."[61] The problem with this ethic, as Animal Liberation proponents point out, is that it is vulnerable to the charge of "environmental fascism" in that it provides no recognition of the value of individual organisms. This is because, considered on its own, it can be interpreted as suggesting that individuals are dispensible - indeed, might need to be sacrificed for the good of the whole.[62]

An autopoietic approach to intrinsic value is not vulnerable to the objections that are associated with either extreme atomism or extreme holism. Whereas atomistic approaches attribute intrinsic value only to individual organisms, and whereas an unqualified holistic approach attributes intrinsic value only to whole ecosystems (or perhaps only the ecosphere itself), an autopoietic approach recognizes the value of "all process-structures that continuously strive to generate their own organizational activity and structure."[63] That is, an autopoietic approach recognizes

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59. Ibid., p. 285.

60. Ibid., p. 288. On the meaning of intrinsic value, see also William Godfrey-Smith, "The Value of Wilderness," Environmental Ethics 1 (1979): 309-19 at p. 309.

61. Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949), pp. 224-25. See also Callicott, "The Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethic," and James D. Heffernan, "The Land Ethic: A Critical Appraisal," Environmental Ethics 4 (1982): 235-47.

62. Defenders of Leopold's land ethic have sought to get around this problem by presenting their ethic as a much needed addition, rather than alternative, to atomistic approaches to intrinsic value theory such as Animal Liberation or Life-based ethics. See, for example, Callicott, "The Conceptual Foundations of the Land Ethic," p. 207.

the value not only of individual organisms but also of species, ecosystems, and the ecosphere ("Gaia").

In contrast to the autopoietic approach, which proceeds via an axiological (i.e., value theory) route, transpersonal ecology proceeds by way of a psychological-cosmological route and is concerned to address the way in which we experience the world. The primary concern of transpersonal ecology is the cultivation of a wider sense of self through the common psychological process of identification. Whereas axiological approaches issue in moral injunctions or a code of conduct (i.e., "you ought to respect other beings, regardless of how you might personally experience them"), transpersonal ecology is concerned to cultivate a lived sense of identification with other beings. Indeed, as Fox points out, transpersonal ecology explicitly rejects approaches that issue in moral injunctions and advances instead an approach that seeks "to invite and inspire others to realize, in a this-worldly sense, as expansive a sense of self as possible."[64] As Arne Naess says, if your sense of self embraces other beings, then "you need no moral exhortation to show care" toward those beings.[65]

The transpersonal ecology approach is described as both cosmological and psychological because it proceeds from a particular picture of the world or cosmos - that we are, in effect, all "leaves" on an unfolding "tree of life" - to a psychological identification with all phenomena (i.e., with all leaves on the tree). Fox refers to this approach as transpersonal ecology because it is concerned to cultivate a sense or experience of self that extends beyond one's egoic, biographical, or personal sense of self to include all beings.[66]

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63. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, p. 288.

64. Warwick Fox, "The Meanings of 'Deep Ecology,'" Island Magazine, Autumn 1989, pp. 32-35 at p. 34.

65. Arne Naess, "Self-realization: An Ecological Approach to Being in the World," The Trumpeter 4 (1987): 35-42 at p. 39.

66. Transpersonal ecology should not be confused with a "New Age" perspective. Indeed, transpersonal or deep ecologists have been quite critical of New Age ideas, particularly those of the Christian theologian Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. See George Sessions, review of The Soul of the World: An Account of the Inwardness of Things, by Conrad Bonifazi, Environmental Ethics 3 (1981): 275-81; George Sessions, review

Some critics might object that this kind of approach attempts to derive an "ought" from an "is" in that it proceeds from the fact of our interconnectedness with the world to a particular kind of normative orientation toward the world. However, as Fox explains, transpersonal ecologists are

> ... not in the business of attempting to claim that this fact logically implies that we ought to care about the world. The fact of our interconnectedness with the world does not logically imply either that we ought to care about the world of which we are a part or that we ought not to care about it ... [Rather] For transpersonal ecologists, given a deep enough understanding of the way things are, the response of being inclined to care for the unfolding of the world in all its aspects follows 'naturally' - not as a logical consequence but as a psychological consequence; as an expression of the spontaneous unfolding (development, maturing) of the self.[67]

The above two ways of defending an ecocentric perspective - the autopoietic intrinsic value theory approach and the transpersonal ecology approach - each have different advantages and are appropriate in different contexts. For example, the autopoietic intrinsic value theory approach is more suitable to translation into legal and political practice than the transpersonal ecology approach (it makes sense to enact legislation that demands the recognition of certain intrinsic values whereas it makes no sense to enact legislation that demands that people identify more widely with the world around them). Indeed, there are already existing legislative precedents that recognize the intrinsic value of ecosystems, as I show below. The transpersonal ecology approach, on the other hand, is more appropriately pursued in the community through educational and cultural activities (although these activities can, of course, be encouraged and financially supported by the state). Transpersonal ecology, in other words, lends itself far more to a "bottom-up" rather than a "top down" approach to social change.

Transpersonal ecology may be seen as forming part of the vanguard of the cultivation of a new world-view, a new culture and character, and new political horizons that are appropriate to our times. As we saw in Chapter 1, it is precisely this

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of Eco-Philosophy: Designing New Tactics for Living, by Henryk Skolimowski, Environmental Ethics 6 (1984): 167-74; and Devall and Sessions, Deep Ecology, pp. 5-6 and 138-44. For the historical roots of the transpersonal ecology approach one needs to look in the direction of people as diverse (in some senses) as Spinoza and Gandhi (see Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, Chapter 4).

67. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, pp. 387-88.

kind of emphasis on cultural renewal and re-envisioning our place in nature that forms the essence of ecocentric emancipatory ecopolitics. This is why I regard transpersonal ecology as having more in common with the kind of ecocentric emancipatory stream of ecopolitical defended in this inquiry than an autopoietic intrinsic value theory approach (although I regard the latter as a useful complement).

Given this special affinity between transpersonal ecology and ecocentric emancipatory ecopolitics, I now want to devote some consideration to the kind of cosmology (or general picture of the world) that informs these different levels of discourse. I will also use this opportunity to point out the many ways in which the general perspective of ecocentrism is superior to that of anthropocentricism.

Essential to the cosmology that informs ecocentrism is the recognition that humans are part of, rather than separate from or above, nature. This recognition is based on an ecologically informed philosophy of internal relatedness according to which all organisms are profoundly interrelated with their environment - indeed, constituted by their interrelationships.[68] According to Birch and Cobb, it is more accurate to think of the dynamic, inextricably interconnected phenomenon that is life in terms of "events" or "societies of events" rather than "substances":

> Events are primary, and substantial objects are to be viewed as enduring patterns among changing events ... The ecological model is a model of internal relations. No event first occurs and then relates to its world. The event is a synthesis of relations to other events.[69]

According to this picture of reality, the world is an intrinsically dynamic, interconnected web of relations in which there are no absolutely discrete entities and no absolute dividing lines between the living and the nonliving, the animate and the inanimate, or the human and the nonhuman. This model of reality undermines anthropocentrism insofar as whatever faculty we choose to underscore our own uniqueness or specialness as the basis of our moral superiority (e.g., rationality,

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68. For a clear exposition of this model, see Charles Birch and John B. Cobb, Jr., The Liberation of Life: From the Cell to the Community (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). See also J. Baird Callicott, "The Metaphysical Implications of Ecology," Environmental Ethics 8 (1986): 301-316; and McLaughlin, "Images and Ethics of Nature."

69. Birch and Cobb, The Liberation of Life, p. 95.

language, or our tool-making capability), we will invariably find either that there are some humans who do not possess such a faculty or that there are some nonhumans who do.[70] Nonanthropocentric ethical theorists have used this absence of any absolute dividing line between humans and nonhumans to point out the logical inconsistency of conventional anthropocentric ethical and political theory that purports to justify the exclusive moral considerability of humans on the basis of our separateness from, say, the rest of the animal world. Indeed, we saw in the previous section how Singer used this kind of argument to criticize human-centred ethical theory and defend Animal Liberation. While there are undoubtedly many important differences in degree (as distinct from kind) between all or some humans and nonhumans, as Fox points out, this cuts both ways; for example, there are countless things that other animals do better than us.[71] (And there are also innumerable differences in capacities that separate nonhuman life-forms from each another!) From an ecocentric perspective, to single out our particular forms of excellence as the basis of our exclusive moral considerability is simply human chauvinism that conveniently fails to recognize the particular forms of excellence of other life-forms: it assumes that what is distinctive about humans is more worthy than, rather than simply different to, the distinctive features of other life-forms. John Rodman has called this the "differential imperative," that is, the selection of what humans do best (as compared to other species) as the measure of human virtue and human superiority over other species. Rodman traces this idea in Western thought as far back as Socrates - who saw the most virtuous human as "the one who most fully transcends their animal and vegetative nature."[72] The upshot, of course, is that one becomes a better human if one maximises one's "species-specific differentia." (In this respect, the putative human/animal opposition may also be seen as serving "as a convenient symbolic device whereby we have attributed to animals the dispositions we have not

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70. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, see pp. 15-17.

71. Ibid., see p. 16.

72. John Rodman, "Paradigm Change in Political Science," American Behavioral Scientist 24 (1980): 49-78 at p. 54.

been able to contemplate in ourselves."[73]) Indeed, as Fox has argued, a variety of human/nonhuman distinctions have served as the fundamental legitimating ideology not only for the domination of the nonhuman world but also for different kinds of intra-human oppression. For example, the fundamental legitimating ideology of patriarchy, racism, and imperialism has been that men, whites, and Westerners are seen to possess - or possess to a greater extent than their counterparts (i.e., women, blacks, or non-Westerners) - certain qualities that are deemed to be of the essence of humanness (e.g., rationality, civilization, being more favoured by God). These classes of people have therefore seen themselves as "more fully human" than, and hence as morally superior to, their counterparts.[74]

Ecocentric theorists have also pointed out how new scientific discoveries have served to challenge long standing anthropocentric prejudices. As the Copernican and Darwinian revolutions have shown, scientific discoveries can have a dramatic impact on popular conceptions of, and orientations toward, nature. This is not to argue that science can or ought to determine ethics or politics but merely to acknowledge that in modern times the credibility of any Western philosophical world-view is seriously compromised if it is not at least cognizant of, and broadly consistent with, current scientific knowledge. It is indeed ironic that while an ecocentric orientation is often wrongly criticized for resting on an "anti-science," mystical idealization of nature, many proponents of ecocentrism are quick to point out that the fundamental philosophical premises of ecocentrism (i.e., the model of internal relations) are more consistent with modern science than the premises of anthropocentrism, which posit humans as either separate from and above the rest of nature (or if not separate from the rest of nature then nonetheless the acme of

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73. Ted Benton, "Humanism = Speciesism: Marx on Humans and Animals," Radical Philosophy (Autumn 1988): 4-18 at p. 11. Benton is summarizing here an argument of Mary Midgley's from Animals and Why They Matter (Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1983), Chapter 2.

74. Warwick Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels," Environmental Ethics 11 (1989): 5-25 at pp. 21-25. This argument will be taken up again in Chapter 8 on ecofeminism in my discussion of the conceptual links between the domination of women and the domination of nonhuman nature.

evolution). In this respect, ecocentric theorists, far from being anti-science, often enlist science to help undermine deeply ingrained anthropocentric assumptions that have found their way into many branches of the social sciences and humanities, not the least of which are the major political philosophies of the modern world - liberalism and Marxism - as I showed in Chapter 1. As George Sessions has argued, modern science has "been the single most decisive non-anthropocentric intellectual force in the Western world."[75] Indeed, it was the mechanistic, materialistic world-view of the Enlightenment (an intellectual movement that Scruton describes as having been "prodigious of political theory") that has most come under challenge by these new scientific discoveries.[76] Just as the Copernican and Darwinian revolutions helped to undermine the Judaeo-Christian, medieval world-view of the "great chain of being" (according to which the number of life-forms were fixed in a static hierarchy with humans standing above the beasts and below the angels), the picture of ecological and subatomic reality that has emerged from new discoveries in biology and physics has now made inroads into many of the assumptions of the Newtonian world-view.[77] The most pervasive of these are technological optimism - the confident belief that with further scientific research we can rationally manage (i.e., predict, manipulate, and control) all the negative unintended consequences of large-scale human interventions in nature; atomism - the idea that nature is made up of discrete building blocks and that the observer is therefore completely separate from the observed; and anthropocentrism - the belief that there is a clear dividing line between humankind and the rest of nature, that humankind is the only or principal source of value and meaning in the world, and that therefore nonhuman nature is there for no other purpose but to serve humankind.[78]

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75. George Sessions, "Anthropocentrism and the Environmental Crisis," Humboldt Journal of Social Relations 2 (1974): 71-81 at p. 73.

76. Roger Scruton, A Dictionary of Political Thought (London: Pan Books, 1983), p. 149.

77. Fritjof Capra, The Turning Point: Science, Society, and the Rising Culture (London: Fontana, 1983).

Clearly, ecocentric theorists are not against science or technology per se; rather they are against scientism (i.e., the conviction that empiric-analytic science is the only valid way of knowing) and technocentrism (i.e., anthropocentric technological optimism). The distinction is crucial. Indeed, many ecocentric theorists are keenly interested in the history and philosophy of science and are fond of pointing out the reciprocal interplay between dominant images of nature (whether derived from science, philosophy, or religion) and dominant images of society.[79] This mutual reinforcement is reflected in the resonance between medieval Christian cosmology and the medieval political order (both of which emphasized a hierarchy of being) and between the Newtonian world-view and the rise of modern democracy (both of which emphasized atomism). Ecocentric theorists are now drawing attention to what Fox has referred to as the "structural similarity" between the ecological model of internal relatedness and the picture of reality that has emerged in modern biology and physics, although it is too early to say what the societal implications of these developments might be.[80] Unlike Capra, I see nothing inevitable about the

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78. George Sessions has noted ("Ecocentrism and the Greens: Deep Ecology and the Environmental Task," The Trumpeter 5 (1988): 65-69 at p. 67) that the idea of a hierarchical chain of being can be traced back to Aristotle, who "rejected the Presocratic ideas of an infinite universe, cosmological and biological evolution, and heliocentrism, and proposed instead an Earth-centred, finite universe, wherein humans were differentiated from, and seen as superior to, the rest of the animals by virtue of their rationality. Also found in Aristotle is the hierarchical concept of the 'great chain of being' which holds that Nature made plants for the use of animals, and animals were made for the sake of humans (Politics I, 88)." Sessions points out that the Presocratics, on the other hand, had been much more interested in cosmological inquiry and nature in general rather than just the subset humans. For a sustained critique of anthropocentrism, see David Ehrenfeld, The Arrogance of Humanism (New York: Oxford University Press, 1981). For a more exhaustive and succinct critique of anthropocentrism, see Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, pp. 14-24. Fox concludes that anthropocentrism is self-serving, "empirically bankrupt and theoretically disastrous," logically inconsistent, morally objectionable, and incongruent with a genuinely open approach to experience.

79. Rodman, "Paradigm Change in Political Science," p. 67; Capra, The Turning Point; Sessions, "Anthropocentrism and the Environmental Crisis"; and Sessions, "Ecocentrism and the Greens."

80. Warwick Fox, "Deep Ecology: A New Philosophy of Our Time?" The Ecologist 14 (1984): 194-200. See also J. Baird Callicott, "Intrinsic Value, Quantum Theory, and Environmental Ethics," Environmental Ethics 7 (1985): 257-75, and Capra, The Turning Point.

possibility of a new, ecologically informed cultural transformation, although there are certainly many exciting possibilities "in the wind."[81]

The structural similarity between the ecological model of internal relatedness that informs ecocentrism and the picture of reality delivered to us by certain branches of modern science is, of course, no substitute for an ethical and political justification of an ecocentric perspective (although it does serve to undermine the opposing perspective of anthropocentrism). As I noted earlier, in modern times general consistency with science is merely a necessary as distinct from a sufficient condition for the acceptance of an alternative philosophical world-view in the West. In this respect, I agree with Michael Zimmerman's observations concerning the relevance of science to environmental ethics and politics: that it may help to inspire and prepare the ground for a new orientation toward nature and "give humanity prudential reasons for treating the biosphere with more care" but that "a change in scientific understanding alone cannot produce the needed change of consciousness."[82] It is no argument, then, simply to appeal to the authority of nature as a justification for a particular political world-view. It is, on the other hand, perfectly reasonable to question an opposing world-view on the ground that the assumptions on which it is based have been shown by science to be erroneous.

The ecocentric recognition of the interelatedness of all phenomena together with its prima facie orientation of inclusiveness of all beings means that it is far more protective of the earth's life-support system than an anthropocentric perspective. As Michael Zimmerman has argued in addressing the practical consequences of an anthropocentric perspective:

> If humankind is understood as the goal of history, the source of all value, the pinnacle of evolution, and so forth, then it is not difficult for humans to justify the plundering of the natural world, which is not human and therefore "valueless."[83]

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81. For Capra's somewhat deterministic conclusions, see The Turning Point, pp. 464-66.

82. Michael Zimmerman, "Quantum Theory, Intrinsic Value, and Panentheism," Environmental Ethics 10 (1988): 3-30 at p. 5.

When anthropocentric assumptions of this kind are combined with a powerful technology, the capacity for environmental destruction increases dramatically. As Bateson once forcefully put it:

> If this is your relationship to nature and you have an advanced technology, your likelihood of survival will be that of a snowball in hell. You will die either of the toxic by-products of your own hate, or, simply, of over-population and over-grazing.[84]

Anthropocentrism of this extreme kind may be seen as a kind of ecological myopia or unenlightened self-interest that is blind to the ecological circularities between the self and the external world, with the result that it continues to inflict unintended and unforeseen ecological damage. (As I note in Chapter 5, this ecological boomerang effect resulting from humanity's hubris has been described metaphorically by the Frankfurt school as the "revenge of nature.") An ecocentric perspective, on the other hand, recognizes that nature is not only more complex than we presently know but also quite possibly more complex, in principle, than we can know.[85]

Although the anthropocentric Resource Conservation and Human Welfare Ecology streams of environmentalism adopt a general ethic of prudence and caution based on an ecologically enlightened self interest, they differ from an ecocentric perspective insofar as they see the ecological tragedy as essentially a human one. Those belonging to the ecocentric stream, on the other hand, see the tragedy as both human and nonhuman. This is because a thoroughgoing ecocentric perspective is one that, "within obvious kinds of practical limits, allows all entities (including humans) the freedom to unfold in their own way unhindered by the various forms of human

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83. Michael Zimmerman, "Marx and Heidegger on the Technological Domination of Nature," Philosophy Today 23 (1979): 99-112 at p. 103.

84. Gregory Bateson, Steps to an Ecology of Mind (Frogmore, St. Albans: Paladin, 1973), pp. 436-37.

85. The complexity and unpredictability of many physical and social phenomena is underscored by the new body of scientific inquiry known as chaos theory, which shows that many systems that behave deterministically (i.e., according to laws that can be described mathematically) are nonetheless inherently unpredictable beyond a certain point. This is due to the fact that these systems exhibit nonlinear dynamical properties, which means that they are extraordinarily sensitive to initial conditions, together with the fact that it is impossible in principle to specify the initial conditions of any system precisely. That is, some degree of approximation is always involved. For a general introduction, see James Gleick, Chaos: Making a New Science (London: Cardinal, 1987).

domination."[86] Such a general perspective may be seen as seeking what I refer to as "emancipation writ large." In according ontological primacy to the internal relatedness of all phenomena, an ecocentric perspective adopts an "existential attitude of mutuality" in recognition of the fact that one's personal fulfilment is inextricably tied up with that of others.[87] This is often encapsulated in the maxim "unity-in-diversity" whereby "the development and fulfilment of the part can only proceed from its complex interrelationship and unfolding within the larger whole."[88] This is not seen as resignation or self sacrifice but rather as a positive affirmation of the fact of our embeddedness in ecological relationships. As we have seen, this is expressed by transpersonal ecology theorists in the concept of Self-realization - the cultivation of a mode of being that sustains the widest possible identification with all beings. The cultivation of this mode of being means that compassion and empathy naturally flow as part of an individual's way of being in the world rather than as a duty or obligation that must be performed regardless of one's personal inclination.[89]

The ecological model of internal relatedness upon which ecocentrism rests applies not only in respect of human-nonhuman relations but also in respect of intra-human relations: in a biological, psychological, and social sense we are all constituted by our interactions between other humans, and our social, economic, and cultural institutions. As Birch and Cobb emphasize, we do not exist as separate entities and then enter into these relations. From the moment we are born, we are constituted by, and coevolve within the context of, such relations.[90] According to this model, we are neither completely passive and determined beings (as crude behaviourists would have

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86. Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 6. The term "unfold" is used here and throughout this inquiry to mean "develop" or "grow" and is not intended imply any predestination.

87. Trevor Blake, "Ecological Contradiction: The Grounding of Political Ecology," Ecopolitics II Proceedings (Hobart: Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, 1987), pp. 76-83 at p. 79.

88. John Clark, The Anarchist Moment: Reflections on Culture, Nature and Power (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1984), p. 28.

89. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, Chapter 7.

90. Birch and Cobb, The Liberation of Life, see p. 95.

it) nor completely autonomous and self-determining beings (as some existentialists would have it). Rather, we are relatively autonomous beings who, by our purposive thought and action, help to constitute the very relations that determine who we are.[91] Of course, this kind of social interactionist model is not new to the social sciences. For example, in social psychology it is found in the theories of symbolic interactionism and phenomenology. In political philosophy a similar social model is implicit in the many communitarian and socialist political philosophies that seek the mutual self-realization of all in preference to the individual self-realization of some. This helps to explain why there is a much greater elective affinity - and hence a much greater potential for theoretical synthesis - between ecocentrism and communitarian and socialist political philosophies than there is between ecocentrism and individualistic political philosophies such as liberalism, as I pointed out in Chapter 1. Ecocentric emancipatory ecopolitical theorists have generally discarded what Callicott has aptly described as "the threadbare metaphysical cloth from which classical utilitarianism [and, I would add, Lockean liberalism] is cut." That is because, as Callicott puts it,

> Utilitarianism [indeed liberalism in general] assumes a radical individualism or rank social atomism completely at odds with the relational sense of self that is consistent with a more fully informed evolutionary and ecological understanding of terrestrial and human nature.[92]

What is new about an ecocentric perspective is that it applies this interactionist model of internal relations to a broader and more encompassing pattern of layered interrelationships that extend beyond personal and societal relations to include relations with the rest of the biotic community. This means that the nonhuman world is no longer posited simply as the background or means to human self-realization, as is the case in most modern political theorizing. Rather, the

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91. For more on the concept of relative autonomy, see Warwick Fox, Approaching Deep Ecology: A Response to Richard Sylvan's Critique of Deep Ecology, Environmental Studies Occasional Paper no. 20 (Hobart: Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, 1986), section 3.

92. J. Baird Callicott, "What's Wrong with the Case for Moral Pluralism," Paper presented to the Pacific Division Meeting of the American Philosophy Association, Berkeley, 23 March 1989, pp. 32-33.

different members of the nonhuman community are also appreciated as important in their own terms, as having their own (varying degrees of) relative autonomy, and their own modes of being. The implications of applying this expanded model of internal relations to social and political thought are far-reaching. As Zimmerman has put it,

> ... the paradigm of internal relations lets us view ourselves as manifestations of a complex universe; we are not apart but are moments in the openended, novelty-producing process of cosmic evolution.[93]

Some Common Criticisms and Misunderstandings Concerning an Ecocentric Perspective

Ecocentrism's challenge to cultural and political orthodoxy has been widely resisted and misunderstood by critics for a variety of reasons: that it is impossible, misanthropic (or at least insulting to some humans, notably the oppressed), impractical, and/or based on an all too convenient idealization of nature. Some resistance is, of course, to be expected of a perspective that, as George Sessions has put it, is mounting a philosophical challenge to "the pervasive metaphysical and ethical anthropocentrism that has dominated Western culture" since the rise of classical Greek humanism.[94] But is such resistance warranted? In the remainder of this chapter I address what I see as five common objections that have contributed to this resistance to ecocentrism.

One common criticism is that it is impossible to perceive the world other than from an anthropocentric perspective since we are, after all, human subjects. This criticism, however, entirely misses the point of the ecocentric critique of anthropocentrism by conflating the identity of the perceiving subject with the content of what is perceived and valued, a conflation that Fox refers to as the "anthropocentric fallacy."[95] In particular, this kind of understanding conflates the weak, trivial,

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93. Zimmerman, "Quantum Theory, Intrinsic Value, and Panentheism," p. 17.

94. George Sessions, "The Deep Ecology Movement: A Review," Environmental Review 11 (1987): 105-25 at p. 105.

95. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, p. 23 and Chapter 1 generally (this chapter provides the most concise summary in the ecophilosophical literature of the main arguments against anthropocentrism and of the main fallacies that people tend to commit in objecting to these arguments against anthropocentrism).

tautological sense of the term anthropocentrism (i.e., that we can only ever perceive the world as human subjects - who can argue against this?) and the strong, substantive, informative sense of the term (the unwarranted, differential treatment of other beings on the basis that they do not belong to our own species). As Fox points out, it is like saying that a male cannot be nonsexist or that a white person cannot be nonracist because they can only perceive the world as male or white subjects. This understanding ignores the fact that males and whites are quite capable of cultivating a nonsexist or nonracist consciousness or, in this case, that humans are quite capable of cultivating a nonanthropocentric consciousness.

A second misconception of ecocentrism is to interpret its sustained critique of anthropocentrism as anti-human and/or as displaying an insensitivity to the needs of the poor and the oppressed. However, this criticism fails to appreciate the clear distinction between a nonanthropocentric and a misanthropic perspective (Fox calls this misinterpretation "the fallacy of misplaced misanthropy").[96] Ecocentrism is not against humans per se or the celebration of humanity's special forms of excellence; rather, it is against the ideology of human chauvinism. Ecocentric theorists see each human individual and each human culture as just as entitled to live and blossom as any other species, provided they do so in a way that is sensitive to the needs of other human individuals, communities, and cultures, and other life-forms generally. Moreover, many critics of ecocentrism fail to realize that a perspective that seeks emancipation writ large is one that necessarily supports social justice at the intra-human level. Given that it is patently the case that not all humans are implicated in ecological destruction to the same degree, then it follows that ecocentric theorists would not expect the costs of environmental reform to be borne equally by all classes and nations, regardless of relative wealth or privilege. That many ecocentric theorists have given special theoretical attention to human/nonhuman relations arises from the fact that these relations are so often neglected by theorists in the humanities and social

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96. Ibid., p. 19.

sciences. It does not arise from any lack of concern or lack of theoretical inclusiveness with regard to human emancipatory struggles.[97]

Before leaving this point, it should be noted that some ecophilosophically minded writers (e.g., David Ehrenfeld in The Arrogance of Humanism) have been critical of humanism in general rather than just anthropocentrism. This is misleading, however, since humanism does not represent one single idea, such as human self-importance or the celebration of humanity as the sole and sufficient source of value and inspiration in the world, although these have been central ideas in humanism and are the main bone of contention of nonanthropocentric ecophilosophers.[98] Rather, humanism is a complex tapestry of ideas, many strands of which are anthropocentric yet some strands of which are worthwhile and consistent with an ecocentric perspective. As Blackham puts it, "the 'open mind,' the 'open society,' and the sciences and the 'humanities' are the glory of humanism and at the same time a widely shared inheritance."[99] In view of this, it is more accurate simply to criticize the many anthropocentric assumptions embedded in our humanist heritage rather than to equate anthropocentrism with humanism and thereby condemn humanism in its entirety.

A third criticism, which is related to the fallacy of misplaced misanthropy, is that ecocentrism is a passive and quietistic perspective that regards humans as no

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97. For a sustained argument along these general lines, see Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate."

98. Humanist ideas have a long pedigree in Western political thought, beginning with the Sophists in the Athenian city-state of the fifth century B. C. who shifted the focus of theoretical attention away from the phenomenon of nature to the activities of citizens: "Neither nature nor the gods but humanity 'was the measure of all things.'" See George Novack's chapter on the "Varieties of Humanism" in Humanism and Socialism (New York: Pathfinder Press, 1973), p. 106. According to Roger Scruton, there are two related notions of humanism in Western political thought. The first is that outlook, prevalent particularly in Renaissance Europe, "which emphasizes the human, as opposed to or at least in addition to the divine, as a centre of significance, a repository of virtue, a source of strength, purpose and discovery, and a principle of artistic, moral and political expression." The second is the more modern, atheist view expressed by the 18th century encyclopaedists, yet more characteristic of this century, "which emphasizes the human [as distinct from the divine, or indeed any other source, e.g., Nature] as the sole but sufficient source of all our values." See Scruton, A Dictionary of Political Thought, p. 209. The influence of humanism on socialist thought is critically discussed in Chapter 6.

99. See H. J. Blackham, Humanism (New York: International Publishing Service, 1976), p. 102.

more valuable than, say, ants or the AIDS virus. However, a nonanthropocentric perspective is simply a prima facie orientation of nonfavouritism; it does not mean that humans cannot act to defend threatened species or defend themselves from life-threatening diseases. In this respect, the degree of sentience of an organism and its degree of self-consciousness and capacity for richness of experience is a relevant factor (as distinct from an exclusive criterion) in any ethical choice situation alongside other factors, such as whether a particular species is threatened or whether a particular population is crucial to the maintenance of a particular ecosystem.[100] A nonanthropocentric perspective is one that ensures that the interests of nonhuman species and ecological communities (of varying levels of aggregation) are not ignored by us in our decision-making simply because they are not human or because they are not of value to humans. It does not follow from this prima facie orientation of nonfavouritism, however, that the actual outcome of human decision-making must always favour non-interference with other life-forms. Humans are just as entitled to live and blossom as any other species, and this inevitably necessitates some killing of, suffering by, and interference with, the lives and habitats of other species.[101] When faced with a choice, however, those who adopt an ecocentric perspective will seek to choose the course that will minimise such harm and maximise the opportunity of the widest range of organisms and communities - including ourselves - to flourish in their/our own way. This is encapsulated in the popular slogan "live simply so that others [both human and nonhuman] may simply live."

A fourth criticism against ecocentrism is that it is difficult to translate into social, political, and legal practice. How, many sceptics ask, can we ascribe rights to nonhumans when they cannot reciprocate? My primary answer to this kind of criticism is that it is neither necessary nor ultimately desirable that we ascribe legal rights to nonhuman entities to ensure their protection, as I argue below. However, it

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100. For an example of a nonanthropocentric intrinsic value approach that seeks to maximise richness of experience while taking into account populations and ecosystems, see Birch and Cobb, The Liberation of Life, especially at pp. 173-74.

101. Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement," see p. 95.

also needs to be pointed out that there is no a priori reason why legal rights cannot be ascribed to nonhuman entities. As Christopher Stone has argued, the idea of conferring legal rights on nonhumans is not "unthinkable" when it is remembered that legal rights are conferred on "nonspeaking" persons such as infants and foetuses, on legal fictions such as corporations, municipalities and trusts, and on entities such as churches and nation states.[102] Given that there is no common thread or principle running through this anomalous class of right holders, Stone argues that there is no good reason against extending legal rights to natural entities.[103] Stone proposes that the rights of nonhuman entities (or, in his language, "natural objects") be defended in the same way as "human vegetables," that is, by the appointment of a Guardian or Friend who would ensure that the natural object's interests were protected (e.g., by administering a trust fund and instigating legal actions on its behalf in order to make good any injury inflicted on it.) Stone's proposal may be seen as an even more daring adventure in liberalism than Animal Liberation insofar as it seeks to provide the means of legally protecting the special interests of nonhuman and nonsentient entities such as forests, rivers, and oceans.[104]

While Stone's proposals may serve an important educative and protective purpose in respect of nonhuman interests, there is nonetheless an element of absurdity in the notion of extending rights to nonhumans on the basis of a contractarian notion of rights, whereby a right must be accompanied by a correlative duty. Stone appears to lean toward such a view in his suggestion that the trust funds established for the

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102. Christopher Stone, Should Trees Have Standing?: Toward Legal Rights for Natural Objects (Los Altos, California: William Kaufmann, 1974).

103. For a thing to be a holder of legal rights, (i) the thing (or its guardian) must be able to institute legal actions at its behest (or on its behalf), (ii) in determining the granting of legal relief, the court must take injury to it into account, and (iii) the relief must be for the benefit of the thing. Ibid., see p. 11.

104. Rodman (in "The Liberation of Nature?") argues that Stone, like Singer, reinforces the anthropocentric moral pecking order in nature by likening the relationship of a tree and its human guardian to that of "defective human" and its guardian. This claim seems unwarranted since Stone treats rights as no more than a convenient human construct by which legal standing is accorded to a diverse and anomalous range of entities rather than as something having a special ontological status. Moreover, unlike Singer, Stone does not single out the possession of human analogous characteristics as the basis for according moral and legal standing.

benefit of a natural object might also be used to satisfy judgments against that entity (e.g., a river might be liable for the damage inflicted by its flooding and destroying crops!) although he admits that such an idea would prove to be troublesome. As Stone asks: "When the Nile overflows, is it the 'responsibility' of the river? the mountains? the snow? the hydrological cycle?"[105] Stone also canvasses the possibility of "an electoral apportionment that made some systematic effort to allow for the representative 'rights' of nonhuman life."[106] Of course, the first kind of scenario could be avoided by employing a noncontractarian theory of rights (i.e., as not necessarily entailing reciprocal duties), yet there is still something strained and ungainly in the attempt to extend to the nonhuman world political concepts that have been especially tailored over many centuries to protect uniquely human interests. This highlights the need to search for simpler and more elegant ways of enabling the flourishing of a rich and diverse nonhuman world without resorting to the extension to the nonhuman realm of peculiarly human political and legal models such as justice, equality, and rights.[107] As Livingston points out, extending liberal egalitarian ideals in this way "anthropomorphizes the nonhuman world in order to include it in a human ethical code."[108] Similarly, Rodman has argued that the "liberation of nature" requires not the extension of human-like rights to nonhumans but the liberation of the nonhuman world from "the status of human resource, human product, human caricature."[109] It is indeed noteworthy that one of the doyens of modern liberal theory - John Rawls - in discussing the limits of his liberal theory of justice, has stated in passing that

> ... it does not seem possible to extend the contract doctrine so as to include them [i.e, creatures lacking a capacity for a sense of justice] in a natural way. A

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105. Stone, Should Trees Have Standing?, p. 34.

106. Ibid., p. 40.

107. Paul Shepard, "Animal Rights and Human Rites," p. 35.

108. Livingston, The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation, pp. 62-63.

109. Rodman, "The Liberation of Nature?," p. 101.

> correct conception of our relations to animals and to nature would seem to depend [instead] upon a theory of the natural order and our place in it.[110]

The above reservations concerning the appropriateness of extending legal rights to nonhumans are hardly fatal to ecocentrism; nor do they provide any argument for resorting to anthropocentrism through want of appropriate legal mechanisms. Rather, they emphasise the importance of a general change in consciousness and suggest that a gradual cultural, educational, and social revolution involving a reorientation of our sense of place in the evolutionary drama is likely to provide a better long term protection of the interests of the nonhuman world than a more limited legal revolution of the kind envisaged by Stone. In the short term, the above reservations concerning the applicability of liberal categories to the nonhuman world highlight the need for us to rethink the ways in which we might legally protect the interests of the nonhuman world. Indeed, there are already existing alternative legislative precedents that avoid the language of rights but nonetheless ensure that government departments and courts consider both human and nonhuman interests when administering environmental legislation or adjudicating land-use conflicts.[111] Moreover, these legislative precedents are consistent with an autopoietic intrinsic value theory approach rather that an atomistic intrinsic value approach in that they value for their own sake both individual living organisms as well as entities such as ecosystems.

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110. John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (London: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 512.

111. New Zealand is in the forefront of comprehensive environmental legislation of this kind. For example, the preamble to the New Zealand Environment Act 1986 states that the purpose of the Act is, inter alia, to "ensure that, in the management of natural and physical resources, full and balanced account is taken of (i) the intrinsic value of ecosystems; and (ii) all values which are placed by individuals and groups on the quality of the environment; and (iii) the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi [i.e., an agreement between White settlers and Maories]; and (iv) the sustainability of natural and physical resources; and (v) the needs of future generations." A further example is the New Zealand Conservation Act 1987, which defines conservation to mean "the preservation and protection of natural and historic resources for the purpose of maintaining their intrinsic values, providing for their appreciation and recreational enjoyment by the public, and safeguarding the options of future generations" (section 2[1] - my emphasis). "Natural resources" are defined in the Act to include not only plants and animals, but landscapes and landforms, geological features and "systems of interacting living organisms, and their environment."

Finally, some critics are cynical of ecocentrism because they consider that it interprets nature selectively as something that is essentially harmonious, kindly, and benign (ignoring suffering, unpredictability, and change), thus providing an all too convenient model for human relations. Alternatively, critics have argued that the popular ecological views of some Green thinkers lean toward an idealization of nature or employ outmoded ecological notions (such as the "balance of nature") that have little to do with the way nature in fact operates.[112] My response to these criticisms is that it is simply not necessary to an ecocentric perspective to depict nature as having a kindly human face or to show that nature is essentially benevolent or benign in order that humans respect it and regard it as worthy. If we try to judge the nonhuman world by human ethical standards as to what is "kindly" we will invariably find it wanting.[113] Nonhuman nature knows no human ethics, it simply is. Moreover, appealing to the authority of nature (as known by ecology) is no substitute for ethical argument.[114] As Neil Evernden as observed

> Persons with contrasting viewpoints can draw upon this discipline [i.e., ecology], one group regarding it as a revealer of the natural and proper, the other as a source of power and control (which it is natural for us to use). Each group believes its stance to be correct and expects endorsement from ecology.[115]

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112. Charles Elton, the founder of modern animal ecology, has bluntly stated that "the balance of nature does not exist and perhaps never has existed" (Charles Elton, Animal Ecology and Evolution [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1930], p. 17, quoted in Birch and Cobb, The Liberation of Life, pp. 36-37). Birch and Cobb suggest that it is more precise to speak of certain kinds of activity as being "unsustainable" rather than as upsetting the "balance of nature," since the latter suggests that nature is static, that is, that the distribution and abundance of plants and animals in a community does not change. See also Frank N. Egerton, "Changing Concepts of the Balance of Nature," Quarterly Review of Biology 48 (1978): 322-50, and Daniel Simberloff, "A Succession of Paradigms in Ecology: Essentialism to Materialism and Probabilism," Synthese 43 (1980): 3-39.

113. Livingston, The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation, p. 75.

114. Elsewhere I have been critical of this tendency in the work of Murray Bookchin (see Robyn Eckersley, "Divining Evolution: The Ecological Ethics of Murray Bookchin," Environmental Ethics 11 [1989]: 99-116 at p. 107). Indeed, ecoanarchism in general (i.e., both the anthropocentric and ecocentric varieties) is prone to this kind of reasoning, as I show in Chapter 7.

115. Neil Evernden, "Constructing the Natural: The Darker Side of the Environmental Movement," The North American Review, March 1985, pp. 15-19 at p. 16.

Of course, a general familiarity with new developments in science is important to an ecocentric perspective (the employment of outmoded concepts of nature does serve to detract from the force and credibility of ecopolitical argument). As I argued above, a general familiarity with new developments in science by social and political theorists can enhance our understanding of the world around us, improve the general grounding and credibility of an ecopolitical theory, and provide the basis for challenging opposing world-views on the grounds that the assumptions on which they are based have been shown by science to be erroneous. However, science cannot perform the task of normative justification in respect of an ecocentric political theory because it does not tell us why we ought to orient ourselves toward the world in a particular way. It can inspire and redirect our ethical and political theorizing, but it cannot justify it. That is the task of ethical and political theory, and I have already outlined why an ecocentric perspective represents a more plausible and appropriate normative framework than an anthropocentric perspective.

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This chapter has been concerned to indicate the range of different orientations that make up modern environmentalism, to distinguish and defend an ecocentric orientation vis-a-vis other orientations, and to meet some common objections that have been made against ecocentrism. This provides the perspective that will inform the major part of this inquiry, which is concerned to articulate and critically examine the major strands of Green political thought. Before embarking on this part of the inquiry, however, I want to show how the major new ecopolitical and ecophilosophical ideas discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 may be used to clarify the various normative debates that are currently taking place in the world of Green political practice.

Chapter 3

The Green Movement: The Social Bearer of Emancipatory Ecopolitical Thought

Introduction

In Chapter 1 I outlined the participatory, survivalist, and emancipatory themes that have informed the development of ecopolitical thought over the last three decades. In this chapter I relate these developments in ecopolitical thought to the evolving concerns of new social movements since the 1960s and, in particular, to the development of the Green movement from the late 1970s. In particular, I show how my three themes of ecopolitical inquiry may be used to make sense of the evolution of the Green movement. I argue that the Green movement (and its many political party manifestations) may be seen as the social and political embodiment of the third of these streams of ecopolitical thought, which seeks to incorporate and transcend the participatory and survivalist concerns in a positive and ambitious project of fundamental political, economic, and cultural renewal. I also show how the anthropocentric/ecocentric cleavage that I explored in Chapter 2 may be used to shed light on the normative debates that are currently taking place within the international Green movement.

One of the purposes of this chapter is to show that the themes and issues explored in this inquiry are not only of interest to academic observers. They are very much "live" questions that are currently being vigorously debated by the participants of what has become an increasingly influential social and political movement. Indeed, many of the emancipatory ecopolitical theorists discussed in this inquiry have played a key role in galvanizing the Green movement and in shaping and clarifying its social and political agenda.

The social history of the Green movement is a recent one spanning little more than a decade, yet it has already been told and analyzed from many different

perspectives. What began as a modest trickle of literature on Green politics in the 1970s has grown to become a significant stream in the 1980s.[1] Moreover, the phenomenon of Green politics has not been confined to any one country or region, notwithstanding the special publicity given to the West German Greens. Rather, Green ideas have found expression in a range of different forms in the industrially developed countries of the West and, more recently, are now beginning to influence reform movements behind the crumbling iron curtain as well as in the developing countries of the Third World.[2] Green parties have now formed in Western Europe, North America, and Australasia, and although there is considerable variation in terms of the level (i.e., local, state, and national) and extent of representation in different countries, Green candidates have generally met with increasing electoral success during the 1980s.[3] Moreover, despite local differences, many of these Green parties

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1. The literature on Green politics is now too vast to list exhaustively here. The major books specifically devoted to Green politics include Maurice Ash, Green Politics: The New Paradigm (London: The Green Alliance, 1980); Rudolf Bahro, Socialism and Survival (London: Heretic Books, 1982); also by Bahro, From Red to Green (London: Verso, 1984) and Building the Green Movement (London: Heretic Books, 1985); Elim Papadakis, The Green Movement in West Germany (London: Croom Helm, 1984); Fritjof Capra and Charlene Spretnak, Green Politics: The Global Promise (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1984); Jonathon Porritt, Seeing Green: The Politics of Ecology Explained (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984); Peter Bunyard and Fern Morgan-Grenville, eds., The Green Alternative: Guide to Good Living (London: Methuen, 1987); Brian Tokar, The Green Alternative: Creating an Ecological Future (San Pedro: R. & E. Miles, 1987); Drew Hutton, ed., Green Politics in Australia: Working Towards a Peaceful, Sustainable and Achievable Future (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1987); Jonathon Porritt and David Winner, The Coming of the Greens (London: 1988); Werner Hulsberg The German Greens: A Social and Political Profile (London: Verso, 1988); Sandy Irvine and Alec Ponton, A Green Manifesto: Politics for a Green Future (London: Optima, 1988); and Sara Parkin, Green Parties: An International Guide (London: Heretic Books, 1989).

2. See Michael Redclift, "Turning Nightmares into Dreams: The Green Movement in Eastern Europe," The Ecologist 19 (1989): 177-83. Notable examples of Green movements or parties in developing countries include the Mexican Greens, the Brazilian Greens, the Sarvodaya movement in Sri Lanka, the Chipko movement in India, and the Green belt movement in Kenya. On Mexico, India, and Kenya see Michael Redclift, Sustainable Development: Exploring the Contradictions (London: Methuen, 1987), especially pp. 159 and following; also by Redclift, "Mexico's Green Movement," The Ecologist 17 (1987): 44-46. See also Sara Parkin, "The Best of Brazil," Resurgence, July-August 1989, pp. 14-15; Jayanta Bandyopadhyay and Vandana Shiva, "Chipko: Rekindling India's Forest Culture," The Ecologist 17 (1987): 26-34; Joanna Macy, Dharma and Development: Religion as Resource in the Sarvodaya Self-Help Movement (Hartford, Conn.: Kumarian Press, 1983); A. T. Ariyaratne, "Awakening of Sri Lanka," Resurgence, no. 99 (1983), pp. 13-15; and Ariyaratne, "No Poverty Society," Resurgence, no. 108 (1985), pp. 4-8.

share similar historical roots and have produced more or less similar programmes based on the so-called four pillars of Green politics: ecology, social justice, grassroots democracy, and non-violence.[4] In those countries where the national electoral system militates against the formation of minority parties or the running of independent candidates, there have usually been alternative initiatives that have sought to either foster the development of a distinctly Green movement (e.g., the U. S. Green Committees of Correspondence) or at least explore common ground and establish national links between the ecology movement and various other new social movements.[5]

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3. For a recent survey up until the beginning of 1989, see Parkin, Green Parties. Since the publication of this survey, Green Independents in the Australian state of Tasmania gained 18% of the statewide vote and the balance of power in the Tasmanian legislative Assembly in May 1989. Moreover, Green parties in Europe increased their vote in the elections for the European Parliament in June 1989, with the British Green party polling 14.9%, the Belgian Greens 13.9%, the French Greens 10.5%, and the Luxembourg Greens 10.4% (on the European results, see Michael Jacobs, "Green Blues in Europe," Australian Society, August 1989, p. 32). It is also noteworthy that in May 1989 the Dutch government led by Prime Minister Lubbers became the first government to fall on an environmental issue (i.e., its failure to remove a tax concession on private commuting to encourage use of public transport).

4. See, for example, Horst Mewes, "The West German Green Party," New German Critique 28 (1983): 51-85; Pam Waud, "A New Way of Doing Politics," Report from Meetings with European Green Parties, ms., 1985; Ferdinand Muller-Rommel, "The Greens in Western Europe: Similar But Different," International Political Science Review 6 (1985): 483-99, esp. at p. 491; Raymond Dominick, "The Roots of the Green Movement in the United States and West Germany," Environmental Review 12 (1988): 1-30; Stephen Rainbow, "Eco-politics in Practice: Green Parties in New Zealand, Finland and Sweden," Paper presented to the Ecopolitics IV conference, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 21-24 September 1989; and Parkin, Green Parties.

5. The U. S. Committees of Correspondence (C.o.C.) were founded in August 1984 as a nationwide network of grassroots Green organizations dedicated to promoting "Green values." They act as a central clearing house of information on Green ideas for local member groups (of which there are approximately seventy) that come together to form Regional Confederations. The C.o.C. sponsored America's first national Green conference, entitled "Building a Green Movement - A National Conference for a New Politics," which was held at Hampshire College at Amherst, Massachusetts on 2-7 July 1987. For reports on the conference, see Green Letter 3(6) (1987), pp. 7-15 and Synthese, 26 December 1987, pp. 6-7. The C.o.C. has expanded the four pillars of Green politics to Ten Key Values: ecological wisdom, grassroots democracy, personal and social responsibility, non-violence, decentralization, community-based economics, postpatriarchal values, respect for diversity, global responsibility, and future focus. For a full account of how these values have evolved through the Green C.o.C 's SPAKA (Strategy and Policy Approaches in Key Areas) see Green Letter, Autumn 1989.

In Australia, an exploration of common ground between new social movements took place at the "Getting Together Conference" held in Sydney in Easter 1986. The

The Green movement and its various parliamentary representatives have been widely hailed as the bearers of a new kind of politics in Western democracies at a time when the labour movement is experiencing a period of relative stagnation and the neo-conservative right is enjoying a period of relative ascendancy.[6] The Green movement may be understood as arising from a widespread sense of disillusionment with the ability of established political parties and the policy making infrastructure to address adequately what movement participants see as the critical issues of the day - environmental degradation, the arms race, poverty, social discrimination, the crisis of the welfare state, Third World problems and, for many, personal and spiritual alienation. As Horst Mewes has observed in the West German context, the Greens are important because they

> ... are attempting to unite under the aegis of "ecological politics" the myriad social groups in opposition to contemporary advanced industrial society. Ecological politics is, of course, in and of itself a momentous and trenchant development of the last 15 years. The attempt to combine all other current opposition groups under the rubric of radical ecology, however, and inspire them to joint action is an unprecedented, portentous experiment indeed.[7]

The "myriad social groups" Mewes refers to are the so-called new social movements that have emerged in recent years, the most prominent being the environmental, anti-nuclear, women's, and peace movements.[8] My reference to "recent years" is

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Conference resolved to establish a working group to set up an Australian Coalition of Community Organizations to facilitate networking between community groups. See Ian Foletta, "Easter In Sydney," Chain Reaction, Autumn 1986, p. 14, and Joan Staples, "An Inside Look at the Getting Together Conference," Habitat Australia, June 1986, pp. 34-35.

6. Hulsberg, The Greens at the Crossroads, see p. 5.

7. Mewes, "The West German Green Party," p. 52.

8. I will not be using the term "social movement" in any analytical or technical sense in the following discussion. Rather, it will be used merely as a broad descriptive category encompassing all forms of collective action seeking social and political change or cultural innovation, whether operating as formal associations or informal "submerged" networks. This description is ideologically neutral in that it may be applied to both progressive and conservative movements. However, I will be using the qualifier "new" only in relation to certain kinds of progressive social movements. (The question as to what makes a social movement "new" is discussed in the text.) I agree, however, with Alberto Melucci that the concept of "movement" itself seems inadequate to describe the ways in which much "new" social conflict is mobilized; Melucci suggests that it might be more useful, then, to speak of "'movement networks' or 'movement areas' as the network of groups and individuals sharing a conflictual culture and collective identity." This acknowledges the considerable cross network sympathy that exists between different alternative protest groups - sympathy that can

deliberately vague because there is no clear agreement as to whether these new social movements (and the so-called "new politics" that they have generated) are to be dated from the 1960s, 1970s, or 1980s. Moreover, as Jean Cohen (who dates the "proliferation" of new social movements - listed as those concerned with peace, feminist, ecological, and local autonomy issues - from the mid-1970s), has remarked:

> ... there is little agreement among theorists in the field as to just what a movement is, what would qualify theoretically as a new type of movement, and what the meaning of a social movement as distinct from a political party or interest group might be.[9]

Obviously, the period from which we date the rise of new social movements has an important bearing on what kinds of movements are to be included in the phrase (e.g., whether the civil rights movement and counter-culture are to be included along with those already mentioned above) and what kinds of characteristics are taken to give rise to their "newness"; clearly, the adjective "new" presupposes an "old" form of protest from which the new movements have departed. Before further clarifying the relationship of the Green movement to other new social movements it will be helpful, then, to explore the nature and characteristics of these new forms of collective action.

What is "New" About New Social Movements?

One general (and useful) benchmark of comparison frequently referred to is the "old" social movements of the bourgeoisie and the working class that characterized the immediate post-World War II period, where growth dependent "welfare capitalism" was widely perceived as a "positive sum" game by these two major social antagonists. With hindsight, these antagonists are, despite their differences, now seen by many participants and supporters of new social movements as part of a pragmatic and ultimately destructive consensus characterized by a

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often be mobilized at short notice for various forms of collective action on a number of different issues (e.g., ecological, anti-nuclear, peace). Moreover, such movement networks often oscillate from one organizational form to another, from cultural networks united by no more than a newsletter and interlocking affinity groups through to incorporated organizations and political parties and back again, depending on the political and institutional context. See Alberto Melucci, "The Symbolic Challenge of Contemporary Movements," Social Research 52 (1985): 789-816 at pp. 798-99.

9. Jean Cohen, "Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements," Social Research 52 (1985): 663-716 at p. 663.

relatively unswerving faith in economic expansion and material progress. Indeed, it was partly the widespread tacit agreement regarding State economic goals in the 1950s that enabled Daniel Bell to apply his "end of ideology" thesis to that period.[10] Yet, as Krishan Kumar has observed, this broad consensus was short-lived:

> The 1950s ... marked something of a watershed in the history of industrialism, as a social system and as an ideology. On the one side there is the confident expression of a triumphant industrialism, the belief that for the first time in history a particular form of society had resolved the fundamental problems of social survival and growth. On the other side, starting at some point in the 1960s, this belief begins to break up ... The economic benefits of industrialism are seen to be purchased at the cost of increasing "dis-economies" to the society at large: pollution, crowding, the exhaustion of the natural fossil fuels on which the industrial economy itself depends.[11]

The conflicts generated within the growth oriented consensus shared by capital and labour were primarily concerned with balancing claims for distributive justice with the dictates of capital accumulation. These conflicts had, by and large, become relatively institutionalized by the 1950s, that is, they were channelled through established political parties and specialized organizations such as trade unions and employer organizations and were usually settled by courts or state arbiters. In return for institutionalized recognition and the incremental material gains that were thereby promised (at least during prosperous periods), the labour movement had generally come to limit its political agenda to demands that were achievable within this settled framework. Political life under the modern state had thus been largely reduced to the "politics of getting."[12] It was at about this time that intellectuals of the Left began to

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10. In Bell's view, "the problem is that the old politico-economic radicalism (preoccupied with matters such as the socialization of industry) has lost its meaning, while the stultifying aspects of contemporary culture (e.g., television) cannot be redressed in political terms ... The irony, further, for those who seek 'causes' is that the workers, whose grievances were once the driving energy for social change, are more satisfied with the society than the intellectuals. The workers have not achieved utopia, but their expectations were less than those of the intellectuals, and the gains correspondingly larger." See Daniel Bell, The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties (New York: The Free Press, 1960, 1962), p. 404.

11. Krishan Kumar, Prophecy and Progress: The Sociology of Industrial and Post-Industrial Society (Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1978) p. 187. See also Suzanne Berger, "Politics and Antipolitics in Western Europe in the Seventies," Daedalus 108 (1979): 27-50.

12. John Rodman, "Paradigm Change in Political Science: An Ecological Perspective," American Behavioral Scientist 24 (1980): 49-78 at p. 65.

debate the question as to whether the working class had become so integrated into (many would say "co-opted" by) capitalist/consumer society as to be incapable of fulfilling its Marxian role as the historic bearer of socially progressive politics.

New social movements, particularly the environmental, anti-nuclear, peace, women's, and Third World movements, may be distinguished by their success in politicizing new issues and generating new lines of conflict that have served to erode the established left-right political cleavage between labour and capital to the point where, as Ronald Inglehart has observed, it can no longer be automatically applied as "a universal solvent" absorbing whatever conflicts are present in a political system.[13] As Elim Papadakis explains:

> To most theorists of new social movements it is the attempt to alter radically social relationships at all levels and in all spheres that distinguishes new social movements and party formations from other organizations and imparts on them a role which is central both to the understanding of and outcome of social conflict.[14]

The shifting and heterogeneous character of new social movements is such that venturing anything more than broad generalizations concerning these diverse new forms of opposition in Western society is a hazardous undertaking. In view of the importance of the relationship between new social movements and the Green movement, however, it will be helpful to crystallize what I take to be four of the salient characteristics of new social movements that have attracted the attention of close observers:

(i) The new politics is <u>of</u> a class but not <u>for</u> a class.[15] That is, while there are certain recognizable patterns in the class composition of the actors in these new conflicts (see [ii] below), such background does not generally determine the collective

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13. Ronald Inglehart and Jacques-Rene Rabier, "Political Realignment in Advanced Industrial Society: From Class-Based Politics to Quality-of-Life Politics," <u>Government and Opposition</u> 21 (1986): 456-79 at p. 470.

14. Elim Papadakis, "The Greens in West Germany: Social Movement, Interest Group, or Political Party?" <u>Ecopolitics II Proceedings</u> (Hobart: Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, 1987), pp. 342-53 at p. 345.

15. Claus Offe, "New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics," <u>Social Research</u> 52 (1985): 817-68 at p. 833. See also Jean Cohen, "Strategy or Identity," p. 667.

identity and goals of the movements in the way that class background has determined the identity and political goals of the labour movement.[16] The demands of new social movements tend to be highly universalistic (e.g., peace, environmental quality, self-determination) or, alternatively, highly particularistic (e.g., save this river or that building) rather than sectional in the sense of furthering the class-specific interests of a particular socio-economic grouping.[17] New social movements do not tend to claim (there are some exceptions, e.g., certain radical feminist groups) that their own class, sectional, or gender interests represent those of society at large. In this respect they tend to dis-identify with both the Old and the New Left.[18] Moreover, there is a general disregard of social background or function in the recruitment of members or the enlistment of support for most new social movements.[19]

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16. Cohen, "Strategy or Identity," p. 667; Elim Papadakis, The Green Movement in West Germany, pp. 22-23.

17. As Rudolf Bahro notes, the Green movement is "not an organ for the particular interests of these classes [i.e., the new middle class and "decommodified" groups (these terms are explained in the following paragraph in the text)] ... on the contrary, this stratum which is being formed is going into battle - or at least to face the water canon - for common interests which actually affect the whole of society." See Bahro, Building the Green Movement, p. 82. Many Marxists have, of course, disputed this claim to universalism and have argued that a class bias can be found in the goals and aspirations of new social movements, particularly the environmental movement. For a discussion of these charges, see the references in the following note.

18. Offe, "New Social Movements." These are merely generalizations to which exceptions can be found, such as the "not-in-my-back-yard" form of environmental protest that is widely criticized for failing to address the wider structural determinants of environmental degradation along with the causes of the inequitable distribution of environmental "goods" and "bads." For critiques of these and related kinds of environmental protest, see James Ridgeway, The Politics of Ecology (New York: Dutton, 1971); Irving Louis Horowitz, "The Environmental Cleavage: Social Ecology Versus Political Ecology," Social Theory and Practice 2 (1972): 125-34; David Eversley, "Conservation for the Minority?" Built Environment 3 (1974): 14-16; Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "A Critique of Political Ecology," New Left Review 84 (1974): 3-31; William Tucker, "Environmentalism and the Leisure Class," Ethics and Public Policy 7 (1978): 1-40; also by Tucker, Progress and Privilege: America in the Age of Environmentalism (Garden City, New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1982); and B. J. Friedan, The Environmental Protection Hustle (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1979). Many of these critiques, however, tend to exaggerate the selfishness of the motives of environmentalists and treat their universalistic claims as little more than ideological smokescreens and tend to ignore or downplay the concrete issues raised by environmentalists. For a reply to this genre of critique, see Robyn Eckersley, "The Environmental Movement as Middle Class Elitism: A Critical Analysis," Regional Journal of Social Issues 18 (1986): 24-36, and Riley E. Dunlap and Denton E. Morrison, "Environmentalism and Elitism: A Conceptual and Empirical Analysis," Environmental Management 10 (1986): 581-89.

(ii) As we have already seen, new social movements tend not to be supported by the two "principal" economic classes of capitalist society, that is, the industrial working class and those in charge of the disposition of capital (i.e., those who own and/or control the means of production). Rather, research has shown that most of the core actors in these new conflicts come from the highly educated "New Middle Class" (or "New Class"), particularly that sub-group identified by Gouldner as the "humanistic intellectuals" (those involved in the teaching, helping, and personal service professions).[20] However, it is important to emphasize that new social movements do not consist exclusively of New Class radicals; they also tend to be supported by two other kinds of social strata that have been identified by Offe as the "decommodified groups" (i.e., those outside the labour market such as students, unemployed, middle class home-keepers, and the retired as well as those who are marginally employed) and, to a lesser extent, certain disgruntled sections of the self-employed middle class or petit-bourgeoisie (e.g., farmers, shop proprietors, and craftspeople).[21] Offe has pointed out that two of these social segments supporting the new paradigm of politics, namely, the "New Class" and "decommodified groups,"

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19. Ferenc Feher and Agnes Heller, "From Red to Green," Telos 59 (1984): 35-44, see p. 35.

20. The other component of the New Class, according to Gouldner's classification, is the "technical intelligensia" (i.e., bureaucrats and scientists). See Alvin Gouldner, The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class (London: Macmillan, 1979). Stephen Cotgrove has concluded from his empirical survey that the the membership of radical environmental associations is "heavily skewed" towards "the personal service professions and the creative arts - as teachers, social workers, lecturers, doctors ... That is to say, they are employed in occupations outside the market sector where goods and services are sold." See Cotgrove, Catastrophe or Cornucopia: The Environment, Politics and the Future (Chichester: Wiley, 1982), p. 19. See also Stephen Cotgrove and Andrew Duff, "Environmentalism, Middle Class Radicalism and Politics," Sociological Review 28 (1980): 333-51. The category identified by Cotgrove corresponds with Gouldner's "humanistic Intellectuals." For a general survey of the empirical literature on the composition of the environmental movement, see Dunlap and Morrison, "Environmentalism and Elitism." See also F. Parkin, Middle Class Radicalism (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968); B. Bruce-Briggs, ed., The New Class? (New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Books, 1979); Seymour Martin Lipset and Richard B. Dobson, "The Intellectual as Critic and Rebel," Daedalus 101 (1972): 137-98. For a critical discussion of explanations for the predominant New Class involvement in Green politics, see Robyn Eckersley, "Green Politics and the New Class: Selfishness or Virtue?" Political Studies 37 (1989): 205-23.

21. Offe, "New Social Movements," pp. 832-38.

are more likely to grow in number than decline.[22] Offe notes that this development constitutes a

> ... parallel to the early period of the working class movement, which was inspired by its well founded prophecy [at least in the short term] that its numbers and strengths were increased and promoted by the very system against which the struggle was waged.[23]

(iii) New social movements are concerned less with material goals than with symbolic and cultural stakes and the vindication of fundamental values.[24] Their critiques are directed as much toward civil society as the economy or the state, since they are not only politicizing neglected areas of domination (e.g., of women, the Third World, welfare recipients, ethnic minorities, animals, and ecosystems) but also generating new lifestyles and new forms of consciousness. In terms of the issues that have been problematized, the emphasis in collective action is generally seen as moving away from "materialist" political questions concerning production and distribution and towards "post-materialist" issues concerning health and lifestyle, sexuality and gender, cultural identity, human survival, and humanity's relationship to nature.[25] Jurgen Habermas has described these protests as a form of resistance to "the colonization of the life-world" (it should be noted, however, that Habermas sees this as a defensive, often pathological reaction to modernization rather than as an offensive, rational response to the penetration of the state and the market into

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22. Ibid., p. 837. Further support for the increase or at least continuance of the social bases for Green politics can be found in Ronald Inglehart's influential "Silent Revolution" theory, which predicts that the number of people espousing "post-material values" in Western countries will either increase or at least remain stable over time. See Ronald Inglehart, The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

23. Offe, "New Social Movements," p. 838.

24. See Alberto Melucci, "The Symbolic Challenge of Contemporary Movements," p. 797. See also Alberto Melucci, "The New Social Movements: A Theoretical Approach," Theory and Methods 19 (1980): 199-226 at p. 220, and Jan Pakulski, Social Movements: The Politics of Moral Protest (Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1990), forthcoming, p. 69 (page citations refer to the pre-publication manuscript).

25. See Offe, "New Social Movements"; Karl-Werner Brandt, "New Social Movements as a Metapolitical Challenge: The Social and Political Impact of a New Historical Type of Protest," Thesis Eleven 15 (1986): 60-68, especially p. 61; and Melucci, "The New Social Movements: A Theoretical Approach," pp. 220-21.

everyday life. Accordingly, he does not look upon new social movements as an appropriate vanguard for a new society.)[26] In a similar vein, Melucci has pointed out that new social movements are seeking a life-style that is beyond the dictates of instrumental reason.[27] Moreover, actors have become reflexive regarding the process of social identity formation in that they are aware of their role as actively constructing new values and forms of consciousness.[28] As Cohen has observed:

> Contemporary collective actors see ... that the creation of identity involves social contestation around the reinterpretation of norms, the creation of new meanings, and a challenge to the social construction of the very boundaries between public, private, and political domains of action.[29]

Cohen has also described contemporary social movements as being "willing, to a certain extent, to relativize their own values with respect to one another through discourse on goals and consequences."[30]

Yet not all new social movements are overtly political in the sense of making claims that are to be binding on the wider community. Many groups, such as those concerned with pursuing personal growth, religious awareness, or an alternative lifestyle, are simply registering no more than a plea for diversity (their own space) rather than hegemony (determining the space for others). There are nonetheless many other kinds of groups (e.g., the peace, environmental, women's, Third World, and soft technology groups) that are more overtly political in seeking general social and economic change.

(iv) The organizational structures of new social movements are not just instrumental for the movement's goals; they also tend to be part of the goal.

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26. Habermas, "New Social Movements," Telos 49 (1981): 33-37. This article is extracted from the final chapter of Habermas's, The Theory of Communicative Action, vol. 2: Life-world and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987). The compatibility of Habermas's ideas with ecocentric emancipatory ecopolitical thought is examined in detail in Chapter 5.

27. Melucci, "The Symbolic Challenge of Contemporary Social Movements," p. 801.

28. Cohen, "Strategy or Identity," p. 694; See also Melucci, "The New Social Movements: A Theoretical Approach."

29. Cohen, "Strategy or Identity," p. 668.

30. Ibid., pp. 669-70.

Consistency between ends and means is considered essential and considerable emphasis is given to striving for the achievement of direct democracy and decentralized decision-making structures. However, the patterns are not uniform and, in many cases, these "movements" do not always have an enduring organizational structure. Rather, they are often discontinuous, with "members" coming together from submerged networks through a newsletter or informal contact and coalescing around ad hoc issues that have a bearing on new politics themes.[31]

The above general account of the shift in collective action from the "old" politics of the 1950s to the "new" politics of the 1960s and beyond captures certain broad developments in the political aspirations of protest movements in the West in the post-World War II period, yet it also obscures important shifts in the orientation of new social movements since the 1960s. These shifts have led some social movement observers to date new social movements from the 1970s or, alternatively, subdivide the post-1960s period into two more categories with the 1970s being viewed as a transitional period. Jean Cohen, for example, distinguishes new social movements (from the mid 1970s) from the New Left of the 1960s on the basis of the former's self-limiting radicalism. According to Cohen, contemporary social movements lack the "revolutionary and totalizing character" of the New Left and instead share a

> ... self-understanding that abandons revolutionary dreams in favor of the idea of structural reform, along with a defense of civil society that does not seek to abolish the autonomous functioning of political and economic systems ...[32]

Similarly, Claus Offe sees the 1970s as the transition between the "old paradigm politics" of the post-World War era (the "growth-security alliance") and the "new paradigm politics" of new social movements.[33] Ferenc Feher and Agnes Heller, on the other hand, distinguish between new social movements of the 1960s (which they describe as primarily "movements for freedom," e.g., civil rights, sexual freedom,

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31. Melucci, "The New Social Movements: A Theoretical Approach," pp. 220-21.

32. Cohen, "Strategy or Identity," p. 664 (see also p. 668).

33. Offe, "New Social Movements," p. 820. For a comprehensive overview of developments in the 1970s, see Suzanne Berger, "Politics and Antipolitics in Western Europe in the Seventies."

self-expression through the hippy and drug "scenes") and those of the 1980s (which they describe as primarily "movements for life," e.g., peace and environmental quality).[34] This distinction is one that takes special note of the symbolic change in protest colour from red to green during the last three decades. According to these authors, "Red was the symbol of blood, both in the sense of revolution and sacrifice, and it also represented violence. Green is now the symbol of life and nature."[35] These differences in political iconography (e.g., red versus green, the clenched fist versus the sunflower) were also reflected in the different kinds of political language employed during these two periods:

> The "red language" of the 60s was the idiom of alienation and antiauthoritarianism; the "green language" of the 80s talks about "pollution" and "contamination," the "natural" and the "artificial."[36]

Although their characterization of "red" and "green" language is somewhat caricatured, Feher and Heller's distinction between freedom and life captures a general shift in the preoccupations of new social movements from the 1960s to the 1980s.[37] On the "freedom" side, for example, the major comparative study of mass protest in five Western democracies undertaken by Barnes and others in the late 1960s has identified the "new political themes" of that period as "classic democratic ideals and their realization, such as equality, the rights of minorities, and the unfair advantages possessed by the upper middle classes."[38]

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34. Feher and Heller, "From Red to Green," pp. 39-40.

35. Ibid., p. 41.

36. Ibid., p. 42.

37. According to this freedom/life schema, the 1970s may be seen as a transitional period in the shift in orientation of new social movements from "freedom" to "life." This is also broadly consistent with Jean Cohen's and Clause Offe's dating of "new" (read "life" oriented) social movements from the mid-1970s.

38. See Samuel H. Barnes et al., Political Action: Mass Participation in Five Western Democracies (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1979), p. 14. However, not all movement participants sought to instantiate these ideals through violent means. For example, the principles of nonviolent resistance were popularized during the 1960s by the civil rights movement, as were many other themes that are taken up by new social movements of the later period.

On the "life" side, it is indeed the case that participants in the Green movement have embraced "Life" as the central value of the movement, however, it is usually used in a more general sense to mean life in general rather than just human life. For example, the British Green (formerly Ecology) Party's manifesto is entitled "Politics for Life" and its policy on "Land" includes "upholding the basic rights of all other species."[39] Similarly, Bunyard and Morgan-Grenville's recent introduction to Green thinking defines "Green" as "quite simply, concern for life on earth" while Porritt, in his popular introduction to Green politics, heads his list of the "minimum criteria for being Green" with the principle "reverence for the Earth and all its creatures."[40]

However, the freedom/life distinction obscures the fact that the movements of the 1980s have carried forward and built on many of the concerns of the movements of the 1960s, especially the democratic and participatory ideals championed by the civil rights movement.[41] For example, it is clear from the four pillars of Green politics that "life" is not the only principle of Green politics. Indeed, Carl Boggs has argued that "the Green vision of democracy - and of politics in general - probably owes more to new-left radicalism than to any other ideological current."[42]

Moréover, Feher and Heller's freedom/life distinction misleadingly suggests that Green concerns are more regressive than emancipatory - a suggestion that reflects

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39. Politics for Life (London: Ecology Party, n.d.), p. 13.

40. Bunyard and Morgan-Grenville, The Green Alternative, p. x, and Porritt, Seeing Green, p. 10.

41. Indeed, many Green commentators are quick to acknowledge the debt to new social movements of the 1960s. For example, Brian Tokar has argued that "the real origin of the Green movement is in the great social and political upheavals that swept the United States and the entire Western world during the 1960s" (The Green Alternative: Creating an Ecological Future, p. 34). Similarly, Carl Boggs observes that "what are often described as 'new' social movements have their origins in the 1960s and owe much of their growth to the translation of their insurgent energy into more highly articulated forms of popular revolt in the 1970s" (Social Movements and Political Power: Emerging Forms of Radicalism p. 38).

42. Carl Boggs, Social Movements and Political Power: Emerging Forms of Radicalism (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), p. 184.

their concern to evaluate the left/right character of new social movements. For example, they argue that

> The more a social movement combines the value of freedom and life (under the predominance of the former), the more marked is its Leftist character. The more emphatic their contrast, the weaker its Leftist character. The abolition of freedom through life has fundamentalist consequences, while the dismissal of life through freedom has suicidally heroic consequences. Both are detrimental to the Leftist character of movement.[43]

Yet, as I argued in Chapter 1, to approach the Green movement only through the prism of the conventional political spectrum is to miss important new themes. Feher and Heller's freedom/life distinction suggests that all we have witnessed from the 1960s to the 1980s is a general swing of the political pendulum from "leftist" concerns to "less leftist" concerns. This kind of characterization obscures the cumulative development of new social movement concerns - concerns that have been given theoretical expression in the dialectical development of ecopolitical thought from the 1960s to the 1980s.

While Feher and Heller's freedom/life distinction is able to capture the tension between what I have characterized as the participatory and survivalist themes, it misses the most promising and significant theme of emancipation, which is an attempt to transcend the tension between participation and survival. I would therefore suggest a reformulation of their distinction in terms of the dialectic in ecopolitical thought outlined in Chapter 1. That is, we may chart a shift in the emphasis of new social movements from participationist (read freedom, with little emphasis on life) to a survivalist (read life, with little emphasis on freedom) and finally to an emancipatory perspective (representing a creative synthesis of life and freedom in a new ecological matrix) which I have further subdivided into an anthropocentric stream and an ecocentric stream. Let us now use this new emancipatory ecopolitical dimension to explore the nature of the relationship between the Green movement and other new social movements and to clarify the ideological debates within the Green movement as to how the concerns of other new social movements are to be integrated under the banner of an ecological politics.

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43. Feher and Heller, "From Red to Green," p. 44.

The Relationship Between New Social Movements and the Green Movement

Although there now exists a considerable body of literature on Green politics and new social movements, there is nonetheless a considerable degree of confusion concerning exactly where the Green movement is supposed to fit in the "new" and very generalized pattern of politics described above. The problem concerns the Green movement's exact identity, in particular, whether it is to be understood as (i) essentially the environmental movement (this, of course, is an extremely broad and heterogeneous movement containing many different philosophical currents, as I showed in Chapter 2); (ii) a broader based new social movement that represents an ecumenical and pragmatic alliance between the environmental movement and other new social movements with the environmental movement having no greater influence than these other new social movement, or (iii) a broader based new social movement that seeks to integrate the concerns of other new social movements within an ecological matrix, thereby giving primacy to ecological concerns.

The label "Green movement" has been applied by theorists, journalists, and general observers to each of these understandings. This confusion concerning the identity of the Green movement is partly a reflection of its infancy (i.e., it is still in the process of shaping its identity) and partly a reflection of its fiercely grassroots democratic nature, which encourages local diversity and experimentation and resists uniform organizational models and strategies along with the dogmatic notion of a "correct" ideology and identity. Accordingly, the question as to which of these three answers is most accurate or relevant will not only turn up different answers in different countries but also different answers by different Green activists in these countries! Nonetheless, two generalizations can be proffered concerning the identity of the Green movement. First, despite the loose equation (most often made by journalists) between "Greens" and "environmentalists," most Green movement activists and Green political candidates are concerned with both ecological and social

goals. Second, it is generally apparent that the success of Green political parties has been dependent on the support not only of the environmental movement but also of other new social movements (although these other new social movements do not all participate in, or lend their support to, such parties to the same degree).[44]

Notwithstanding these general observations, the matter of the Green movement's identity remains a highly contested matter within both movement and party circles, and one that bears directly upon the self-understanding, values, and collective goals of the movement. One of my principal concerns in this section is to provide a classificatory schema that will help to clarify these internal normative debates concerning the Green movement's identity. (The different international manifestations of the Green movement will be briefly described in the final section of this chapter.)

The main area of normative disagreement concerning the Green movement's identity may be analyzed in terms of the different interpretations given to the status and meaning of the principle of ecology in Green politics - interpretations which, in turn, have a direct bearing on how the principle of ecology is to be integrated with the Green movement's social concerns. On the one hand, there are some movement participants (this includes many ecosocialists) who conceive of the Green movement as a pragmatic "rainbow" alliance of new social movements that ought not to privilege (theoretically or practically) the concerns of the environmental movement vis-a-vis the concerns of other new social movements.[45] This approach may be designated the

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44. In West Germany, for example, Papadakis has found that "over the past decade the Green Party has emerged from and been heavily dependent on support from a variety of single- and multi-issue social movements. This explains why a majority of activists in the new social movements and of voters for the Green party regard the party as an extension of the movement. Nonetheless, the party now attracts support from a wide range of people, many of whom have only had a loose association with the social movements." See Elim Papadakis, "The Greens in West Germany: Social Movement, Interest Group or Political Party?," p. 345, and Papadakis, The Green Movement in West Germany. It has also been found in West Germany that while most active supporters of the ecology and anti-nuclear movements have voted for the Greens, the majority of supporters of the peace movement have voted for the Social Democrats. See Muller-Rommel, "Social Movements and the Greens," p. 59.

45. This is in fact how the West German Greens began, that is, by means of the repeated modest electoral success of local and regional coalitions that ran "Alternative" or "coloured" lists. See, for example, Werner Hulsberg, "The Greens at

"rainbow interpretation" (indeed, many proponents of this approach prefer to describe their politics as "rainbow politics" rather than Green politics). In terms of the meaning (as distinct from the status) accorded to the principle of ecology, adherents of the rainbow interpretation invariably adopt an anthropocentric ecological perspective (this, of course, is consistent with their special preoccupation with human emancipatory struggles).

The alternative view as to the status of ecological concerns (which also generally accords with most of the major introductions to Green politics that have been published in English by participating activists and theorists), is that the Green movement ought to be seen as a new social movement in its own right that has emerged out of concerted efforts to integrate what are seen as the interrelated concerns of new social movements within an ecological, holistic framework.[46] This approach may be designated the "ecology first" interpretation. As Karl-Werner Brandt has observed, this framework had been spearheaded by the environmental and anti-nuclear movements:

> In the wake of these movements, there developed a more or less diffuse ecological pattern of criticism, a "new ecological paradigm," which permitted

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the Crossroads," New Left Review 152 (1985): 5-29. A more recent manifestation of the rainbow approach is the newly formed Rainbow Coalition in Australia, which is intended as an umbrella organization of movements of "various colours," including trade unions, ecologists, Aboriginal Australians, feminists, and aid activists (see Boris Frankel, "The Rainbow Alliance: A New Political Movement is Born," Habitat Australia, June 1988, pp. 33-35). So far, the main concern of this grouping has been with the Australian economy - in particular, in developing an alternative socialist strategy. According to Caddick and Lynch, it has been less concerned with cultural issues and international politics and there has been little input by ecological activists and feminists (Alison Caddick and Maryanne Lynch, "Rainbow Politics: A Real Alternative?" Arena 83 [1988]: 41-47 at p. 44). Alan Roberts has likewise criticized the Rainbow Alliance for what he sees as its lack of "a coherent vision whose overarching inclusiveness can be translated into organization terms." See Roberts, "Spanning the Difference, Seeking Vision," Arena 83 (1988): 36-40 at p. 40. Other defenders of a "rainbow" approach include Senator Michael Macklin, "Green or Rainbow? - The Colour for Australia," Paper delivered to the Ecopolitics I Conference, Griffith University, Brisbane, Queensland, 30-31 August 1986, and Jim Falk, "A Colour-Coded Future? Towards an Alternative Australia," in Moving Left: The Future of Socialism in Australia, ed. David McKnight (Sydney: Pluto Press, 1986), pp. 117-34.

46. For example, see Capra and Spretnak, Green Politics; Porritt, Seeing Green; Porritt and Winner, The Coming of the Greens: Bahro, Building the Green Movement; Bunyard and Morgan-Grenville, eds., The Green Alternative; Tokar, The Green Alternative; Hutton, ed., Green Politics in Australia; Ash, Green Politics; and Irvine and Ponton, A Green Manifesto.

> integration of the various kinds of social protest, or at least gave them an ecological tinge.[47]

While those who accept the ecology first interpretation necessarily accept that an ecological perspective should provide the overarching framework for Green politics, it is clear from the previous chapter that there are different ecological frameworks that may be adopted (i.e., Resource Conservation, Human Welfare Ecology, Preservationism, Animal Rights, and Ecocentrism). In terms of the meaning (as distinct from status) given to this central ecological framework, then, this group can be further subdivided into "anthropocentric ecology Greens" and "ecocentric ecology Greens." (I shall refer to the latter as simply "ecocentric Greens" since the term "ecocentric" is, by definition, one particular kind of ecological perspective.) Anthropocentric ecology Greens generally tend to subscribe to a Human Welfare Ecology perspective. There is, of course, no logical inconsistency involved with such a position. That is, it is possible to argue that ecological concerns should have theoretical and political primacy while also arguing that those ecological concerns should be defended on purely human-centred grounds (e.g., that healthy ecosystems enhance human health, safety, and wellbeing).

Those who defend a rainbow interpretation generally argue that their conceptualization is more ecumenical and nonpartisan than the ecology first interpretation insofar as no particular new social movement is regarded as theoretically privileged. Ecocentric Greens and anthropocentric ecology Greens, however, argue that an ecological perspective should provide the framework or matrix

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47. Brandt, "New Social Movements as a Metapolitical Challenge," p. 62. Similarly, Johan Galtung has characterized the Green movement as an umbrella movement for a number of partial movements, each of them attacking one or more aspects of modern society: "The Green movement is a general reaction to the malfunctioning of the Western social formation ... [it] differs from many other social movements in denying that basic social problems can be solved by attacking one single factor; a much more wholistic approach is needed." See Galtung, "The Green Movement: A Socio-Historical Explanation," International Sociology 1 (1986): 75-90, pp. 76 and 790. Likewise, Jan Pakluski has observed that despite the diversity and fragmentation of "ecopax" movements (i.e., his term for Green movements) in advanced Western societies, "there are clear signs of coalescence of the ecological, anti-nuclear and pacifist initiatives into loosely integrated, national movements ... [a process that] increasingly draws into the eco-pax orbit such other more loosely affiliated groups as feminists, students, squatters, gays, land-rights supporters, animal liberationists, and a host of local political and cultural bodies." (See Pakulski, Social Movements, p. 166)

within which all social problems should be integrated and resolved since the continuation of social life is dependent on a healthy biological support system. Moreover, ecocentric Greens go further and argue that although an anthropocentric ecology first approach is preferable to an anthropocentric rainbow approach, both nonetheless ensure that human interests will be privileged vi-a-vis the interests of the nonhuman world, albeit in varying degrees. They argue that without being relocated within an ecocentric context, human emancipatory struggles will remain wedded to the long standing tradition of anthropocentrism - a tradition that is partly responsible for our present environmental problems (as we saw in Chapter 2).

These normative debates will be discussed in more detail in Part II. In the remainder of this section I want to to show how this important anthropocentric/ecocentric cleavage within the Green movement has been largely overlooked by many observers of new social movements, who regard generalized typologies of new social movements as being transposable onto and descriptive of the Green movement or, alternatively, do not see Green concerns as anything more than an aggregation of new social movement concerns in general.[48] The result is a theoretical understanding that either misses or underplays the significance of the contribution of the radical ecocentric stream within the environmental movement, which, in turn, has fed into the Green movement. Yet, I argue that it is precisely this perspective that is the most novel and distinctive current within the Green movement; I also argue that this perspective provides the most encompassing theoretical matrix within which the concerns of new social movements may be integrated.

For example, theorists of new social movements are more likely to focus on the continuity in the basic themes and values (as distinct from issues) borne by old

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48. Examples include Offe, "New Social Movements"; Feher and Heller, "From Red to Green"; and Papadakis, The Green Movement in West Germany. Papadakis does not even raise the issue of anthropocentrism in his two chapters on "Themes and Concepts" in the West German Green movement and instead singles out "survival" and our "species interest" [i.e., the interests of humanity] as the central concerns of the ecological component of the Green movement (ibid., p. 25). Although the critique of anthropocentrism has been much more prominent in Green debates in North America and Australasia than in Europe (as I note below), it is certainly not absent in Europe, as the above theorists would have us believe.

and new social and political movements of the "modern world" (i.e., since the Renaissance), particularly those set in train by the Enlightenment, whereas ecocentric Green theorists are more likely to stress the differences. An important illustration of this concerns the status of the anthropocentric assumptions embedded in the Western tradition of humanism, according to which humans are considered to be the measure of all things and the centre of value. Most theorists of new social movements tend to find no significant discrepancies between the values of new social movements and the humanist tradition whereas many Green theorists emphasize the ways in which the Green movement is challenging and revising this long standing tradition. Accordingly, theorists who apply new social movement typologies to the Green movement are more likely to locate the Green movement within the humanist tradition and thereby lose sight of its radical ecocentric intent or at least mistake it for something else.

Claus Offe, for example, has identified the issues of concern in the "new paradigm" of politics (i.e., the politics of new social movements) as "preservation of peace, environment, human rights, and unalienated forms of work" - all of which are interpreted as issues to do with "human autonomy and identity" (my emphasis). Indeed, Offe argues that these so-called "new" values are not very new at all because they are all firmly rooted in modern political philosophies of the last two centuries; that is, "they are inherited from the progressive movements of both the bourgeoisie and the working class" and have their foundations "in the modern traditions of humanism, historical materialism, and the emancipatory ideas of the Enlightenment."[49] In Offe's view, what is at issue today are not the values (which he sees as largely uncontroversial) but their mode of implementation and the means by which they may be best realized (these values are listed as autonomy, identity, authenticity, human rights, peace, and the desirability of balanced physical environments).[50] What we are witnessing then, according to Offe, is not a value change but

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49 Offe, "New Social Movements," pp. 849-50.

> ... an awareness of the disaggregation and partial incompatibility within the universe of modern values. The ties of logical implication between values - such as the links between technical progress and the satisfaction of human needs, property and autonomy, income and identity, and, most generally, between the rationality of processes and the desirability of outcomes - are perceived to disintegrate. The cognitive awareness of clashes and contradictions within the modern set of values may lead to a selective emphasis upon some values - which is still different from a value change.[51]

Even some sociologists and political scientists who have confined their attention to the environmental movement, rather than new social movements in general, have (like Feher and Heller) nonetheless continued to miss this new ecocentric challenge to anthropocentrism - largely because they have applied dimensions (such as left/right or radical/conservative) or asked questions that are unable to detect these new values.[52] However, theorists (for example, Lester Milbrath) who do apply the anthropocentric/nonanthropocentric dimension in their empirical research have found

> ... that one of the outstanding characteristics of [core] environmentalists is their high valuation of nature. Everyone values nature, of course, but environmentalists value it for its own sake; many of them have an almost worshipful love for it ...[53]

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50. Ibid.

51. Ibid., p. 850. This argument is endorsed by Elim Papadakis in respect of the West German Green movement. See Papadakis, "The Greens in West Germany," p. 350.

52. See, for example, Grant McConnell, "The Environmental Movement: Ambiguities and Meanings," Natural Resources Journal 11 (1971): 427-35; David Wells, "Radicalism, Conservatism and Environmentalism," Politics 13 (1978): 299-306; Frederick H. Buttell and Oscar Larson III, "Whither Environmentalism?: The Future Political Path of the Environment Movement," Natural Resources Journal 20 (1980): 323-44; and Cotgrove, Catastrophe or Cornucopia. As Warwick Fox points out in a critical discussion of Cotgrove's study, "Cotgrove looks for differences between environmentalists and the general public in terms of attitudes toward industrialism, science, material values, and economic values (all quite respectable sociological variables) and finds them. He does not look for differences between various kinds of environmentalists or between environmentalists and the general public with respect to the hitherto non-sociological variable of anthropocentrism and, consequently, does not find them." See Warwick Fox, Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism (Boston: Shambhala, 1990), forthcoming, pp. 57-8 (page citations refer to the prepublication ms).

53. Lester Milbrath, Environmentalists: Vanguard for a New Society (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), p. 26. Milbrath also found that "environmentalists, much more than non-environmentalists, have a generalized sense of compassion that extends to other species, to people in remote communities and countries, and to future generations" (p. 28).

Against Offe's argument that new social movements are symptomatic only of value clash and contradiction but not value change, ecocentric Green theorists would argue that these clashes and contradictions are partly attributable to our failure to re-examine and revise what Offe refers to as "the modern set of values" that we have inherited from the Enlightenment. To employ familiar Kuhnian language, these clashes and contradictions between values are interpreted as anomalies that cannot by resolved without a paradigm shift, in this case, from the human-centred universe of modern political discourse to the ecological philosophy of interrelatedness that underpins the new ecocentric paradigm. Only then, the reply would run, will the links between the values mentioned by Offe be re-established, a process made possible by revising and "scaling down" some of these values to the point where they are compatible with, indeed, take their meaning in the context of, an ecocentric world-view.

A different kind of challenge to the claimed "newness" of the values of new social movements and the Green movement is that these values are not so much new or disaggregated as recurrent. Although Karl-Werner Brandt has pointed to the "new ecological paradigm" that has developed in the wake of the environmental and anti-nuclear movements, he has suggested that the anti-modern protest engaged in by new social movements is not really "new" when viewed from an historical perspective:

> Neither the themes, aims nor motives of the new social movements are in fact new. The battle about civil rights, about self-determination and autonomy, the women's and peace movements, the counter-cultural critics of civilization, even the environment movement can look back to a long history.[54]

Brandt has argued that new social movements may be seen as expressing "the patterns of a classical critique of modern civilization, which has accompanied the development of modernity antithetically since the late 18th century."[55] They are seen as the latest in a series of reactions to "far reaching thrusts of modernization," part of the latest wave in the cycle of "enlightenment and remythization, rationality and romanticism,

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54. Brandt, "New Social Movements as a Metapolitical Challenge," p. 63.

55. Ibid.

technical instrumentalism and organic living," but a wave that will, like previous ones, eventually subside.[56] It is certainly true that many of the general values defended by new social movements have a long, albeit intermittent, history. They were prefigured in part, for example, in the romanticism of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century and in the early utopian socialist and anarchist attempts to establish communitarian institutions (although these commonalities should not be overstated).[57] Even the most distinctive philosophical current in the Green movement, namely ecocentrism, has (like most philosophical ideas) numerous antecedents and historical resonances - from the life centred theology of St Francis of Assisi through to the American literary tradition of naturalism and pastoralism.[58] Yet this current is now part of a different (and larger) constellation of ideas that has come into being in an entirely new context, namely, in the light of scientific horizons that were unknown to previous advocates of what we now recognize, with hindsight, as ecocentric philosophies and in the light of social and environmental problems and threats the combined scale and magnitude of which have not been experienced before.[59] Indeed, Brandt himself acknowledges elsewhere in the same article in which he asserts the recurrent nature of anti-modern protest that the many different

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56. Ibid., p. 64.

57. See, for example, Helen Irving, "The Romance of Nature," Arena 84 (1988): 64-76, and P. R. Hay, "The Contemporary Environment Movement as Neo-Romanticism: A Re-Appraisal from Tasmania," Environmental Review 12 (1988): 39-59. In his wide-ranging, critical discussion of the view that the environmental movement is yet another expression of romanticism, Hay criticizes the designation of the movement by historians as a lineal descendant of the genteel romanticism of the 19th century as "a good instance of the historical enterprise's recurrent danger of assuming temporal connections on the basis of apparently similar phenomena observed at different points of time" (p. 50). For a discussion of the tradition of "Ecological Community" in political thought, see Robert Nisbet, The Social Philosophers: Community and Conflict in Western Thought (London: Heinemann, 1974), Chapter 5. I discuss this tradition in detail in Chapter 7.

58. See Devall and Sessions, Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered (Layton, Utah: Gibbs M. Smith, 1985), Chapter 6.

59. Carl Boggs has described the Green phenomenon "as a quintessentially post-industrial (and therefore post-liberal and post-Marxist) expression - as a new paradigm of thought and action that demands a break with the old systems of meaning." See Boggs, "The Green Alternative and the Struggle for a Post-Marxist Discourse," Theory and Society 15 (1986): 869-99 at p. 871.

contemporary currents of anti-modern protest have now been integrated within a new ecological paradigm. Yet he does not treat this as significant, preferring to view anti-modernist protest as a cyclical rather than a developmental phenomenon.[60]

The centrality of this ecological context is evident (whether implicitly or explicitly) in most of the major Green texts produced by activists and theorists (material that is often overlooked as relevant sociological data by new social movement theorists). A few more illustrations (i.e., in addition to those provided in Chapter 1) will help to give the flavour of this position (critical argument is reserved for later chapters).

In one of the first book length studies of Green politics, Fritjof Capra and Charlene Spretnak have argued that "Green politics, in short, is the political manifestation of the cultural shift to the new paradigm."[61] By this they mean a new ecological vision of reality (i.e., new vis-a-vis what they call the dominant "mechanistic paradigm") that "emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of all phenomena, as well as the embeddedness of individuals and societies in the cyclical processes of nature."[62]

In the United Kingdom, Peter Bunyard and Fern Morgan-Grenville, who have compiled and edited a comprehensive, popular introduction to Green ideas, consider the essence of the adjective "Green" to be, "quite simply, concern for life on earth."[63] They go on to amplify this basic maxim by pointing out that it is

> Not just concern for one's own family or friends, for a community or for the whole human race, but concern for the process of life itself and everything that

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60. This is the overall thrust of Brandt's argument despite his observation that "whether these recurring waves of movements critical of civilization show a cyclical character, connected perhaps to the long waves of accumulated cycles, is an open question." Brandt, "New Social Movements as a Metapolitical Challenge," p. 64. Eder, on the other hand, sees the ecology movement's self-conception as crystallizing "all aspects of protest into a historically new social movement ... The ecology movement is the new social movement displacing the institutionally integrated labour movement." Klaus Eder, "A New Social Movement?" Telos 52 (1982): 5-20 at p. 6.

61. Capra and Spretnak, Green Politics, p. xx.

62. Ibid., p. xix.

63. Bunyard and Morgan-Grenville, eds., The Green Alternative, p. x.

> nurtures and sustains that process. One can only care for other people by caring for the earth.[64]

According to Brian Tokar, a U.S. Green activist and author of The Green Alternative,

> The science of ecology has inspired a new understanding of humanity as one element in an intricate web of relationships that make up the natural world. A close study of nature reveals the profound interdependence of all living things. The plants, the oceans, the soil, and all living creatures are essential parts of a natural living whole. Removing or damaging one piece of the whole makes life more difficult for all.[65]

And finally, Jonathon Porritt, in his popular introduction to Green politics, has headed his list of the "minimum criteria for being Green" with the principle "reverence for the Earth and all its creatures."[66] According to Porritt, "the state of the planet ... provides the framework within which we develop our ideas, dream our utopias, amend our lifestyles. It provides the earthly reason for all our labours."[67]

As we saw in the previous chapter, much of the inspiration for this new recognition of biological and psychological interconnectedness by many Greens has been provided by the steadily growing literature on deep or transpersonal ecology.

While an ecocentric perspective is the most distinctive stream of thought in the Green movement it does not, as I have noted, command uniform support. Indeed, the conflict between the anthropocentric and ecocentric streams within the Green movement remains a major source of debate in grassroots Green circles just as it is in emancipatory ecopolitical theory. This conflict that has considerably complicated the Green task of integrating ecological concerns with social concerns. As I showed in Chapter 1, the attempt to link social and ecological concerns has given rise to a range of new theoretical endeavours by emancipatory ecopolitical theorists who have sought to synthesize one or more existing egalitarian and communitarian political traditions with an ecological perspective of some kind. Not surprisingly, important differences

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64. Ibid.

65. Tokar, The Green Alternative, p. 4.

66. Porritt, Seeing Green, p. 10. Drew Hutton draws heavily on both Porritt and Capra in outlining a comprehensive Green paradigm in his essay "What is Green Politics?" in Hutton, ed., Green Politics in Australia, pp. 1-33.

67. Porritt, Seeing Green, p. 25.

have emerged in the relative emphases given to social and ecological concerns in these various theoretical efforts, as we shall see in Part II. For present purposes, I intend only to outline some of the major regional and philosophical differences that have emerged within Green theory and practice by way of an introduction to the theoretical issues that will be explored more fully in the remaining chapters of this inquiry.

Major Debates and Cleavages within the Green Movement: An Introduction

The normative debates in and around the Green movement concerning the integration of social and ecological concerns vary in emphasis from country to country and region to region depending on a wide range of interrelated factors. Foremost among these are the social complexion of the major social movements that are active within a given country or region as well as that country's or region's history, political framework, contemporary social and ecological problems, and intellectual traditions. For example, the stronger intellectual influence of the Left in Europe has meant that the theoretical status of socialism (broadly used here to include Marxism) has remained a much bigger preoccupation among Greens in European than it has in North America, where anarchist (in the decentralist, populist tradition) and feminist currents of thought have tended to play a relatively more prominent role in Green debates. This is reflected in the fact that the major philosophical differences that have emerged within Green circles in North America are between the supporters of deep or transpersonal ecology, on the one hand, and the anarchist inspired social ecology of Murray Bookchin and ecofeminism, on the other hand.[68] In Europe, however, the most publicized movement debates have been between the opposing ecosocialist (i.e., anthropocentric rainbow and anthropocentric ecology Green) and ecofundamentalist (i.e., ecocentric Green) factions of Die Grunen, although variations on these tensions can be found in Britain (between, say, the Socialist Environment and Resources Association [S.E.R.A.] and ecocentric Greens) and Australia (between the Rainbow

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68. See Chapters 7 and 8 for a discussion of these debates.

Alliance and ecocentric Green independent groups).[69] These regional differences, however, are merely differences of emphasis. The debate concerning the ecological merits of Marxism, for example, has by no means been confined to Europe but rather has surfaced from time to time - especially in philosophical discussions - in Australia and North America.

A further important point of difference, as I noted in Chapter 2, is that the existence of large tracts of relatively "undeveloped" wilderness areas in North America, Australasia, and Scandinavia has meant that wilderness preservationist conflicts together with debates concerning the importance and moral standing of the nonhuman world have tended to be a more significant feature of the Green debates in these countries compared to long settled and "domesticated" Europe (excluding Scandinavia). For example, in his comparative survey of Green parties in New Zealand, Finland, and Sweden, Stephen Rainbow notes that

> The small population and low population densities in all three countries contribute to the prominence of the natural environment in their respective national psyches, a fact reflected in the long tradition of conservation groups, at least in Sweden and New Zealand.[70]

In Britain and Continental Europe, on the other hand, the anti-nuclear, anti-pollution, and peace movements (which generally proceed from a Human Welfare Ecology perspective) have had a greater relative influence on Green politics than movements for the preservation of wilderness.[71] This particular difference has helped to shape the ways in which ecological problems have been theorized in these respective continents. The result has been that much greater critical attention has

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69. This is not meant to be an exhaustive statement of the ideological cleavages within the West German Green movement. Werner Hulsberg, for example, identifies four factions: the fundamentalists, the ecosocialists, the ecolibertarians, and the realpolitikers (Hulsberg, "The Greens at the Crossroads," p. 22 and following).

70. Rainbow, "Eco-politics in Practice," p. 32.

71. See P. R. Hay and M. G. Haward, "Comparative Green Politics: Beyond the European Context?" Political Studies 36 (1988): 433-48; Rainbow, "Eco-politics in Practice," p. 20. On the other hand, Raymond Dominick has argued that the anti-nuclear movement was "probably the most influential antecedent of the Green movement" in both the United States and West Germany. However, he also argues that debate over nuclear power was more prominent and involved a larger proportion of the population in West Germany than in the United States (see Dominick, "The Roots of the Green Movement," pp. 16-17).

been given to the notion of anthropocentrism by Green theorists and activists in North America, Scandinavia, and Australasia compared with the rest of Europe.

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Emancipatory ecopolitical theorists have helped to shape, focus, and clarify the normative debates within the international Green movement. Indeed, many may be seen as "organic intellectuals" in the Gramscian sense insofar as they have helped to direct and organize the ideas and aspirations of the movement to which they belong.[72] The various syntheses of social and ecological concerns discussed in Part II of this inquiry may therefore be seen as theoretical crystallizations of the themes, issues, and controversies sketched above. These may be lined up along a major and a minor axis: the first, most fundamental, and distinctive axis concerns the human/nonhuman relationship; the second and subsidiary axis concerns social or inter-human questions. The most prominent debate along the former axis is between ecocentric Green theorists (the most representative group here being deep or transpersonal ecology theorists and bioregionalists) and anthropocentric Green theorists (this is the general orientation of eco-Marxists, ecosocialists, and social ecologists [to some extent]). The most prominent debate along the social axis is between ecosocialists and ecoanarchists concerning the role of the State in a Green society. Both of these debates are closely interrelated insofar as argument takes place not only within but also across these two axes with ecosocialists tending to occupy the anthropocentric end and ecoanarchists tending more toward the ecocentric end of the ecophilosophical spectrum (although important exceptions will be noted). The contribution of ecofeminists has also served to enliven and widen the realm of discussion concerning both axes with their central argument than both the domination of people and the degradation of the environment can be linked to patriarchal consciousness. The dialogue between and across these two spectrums has given rise

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72. Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, trans. and ed. by Quinton Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1976), especially pp. 5-23. Some emancipatory theorists (for example Rudolf Bahro) have had a decisive influence on the formation of Green parties (see Papadakis, The Green Movement in West Germany, p. 18).

to a diverse and growing body of Green literature that has considerably enriched and expanded the domain of ecopolitical inquiry. I now intend to examine each of these major emancipatory ecopolitical syntheses.

Part II

An Ecocentric Analysis of Green Political Thought

Introduction to Part II

I argued in Part I that emancipatory ecopolitical theorists are united by their characterization of the ecological crisis as not just a crisis of participation and survival but also a crisis of culture and character. I showed that emancipatory ecopolitical theorists are also united by their attempt to integrate the concerns of the environmental movement with the concerns of other new social movements in a general emancipatory theory that opposes all forms of domination. However, I showed that emancipatory ecopolitical thought represents a spectrum of thought (rather than an internally coherent political theory) that is divided over what kinds of post-liberal political traditions are best suited to ushering in a new phase of cultural renewal, social emancipation, and ecological restoration. At a more fundamental level I showed that emancipatory ecopolitical theorists are also divided over how far the anthropocentric assumptions of our Western political heritage need to be revised.

In Part II I identify, articulate, and critically examine the major strands of emancipatory ecopolitical thought that are currently vying for ascendancy. My principal concern is to determine the extent to which each particular synthesis of ecological and political thought is anthropocentric or ecocentric, to defend an ecocentric orientation, and to meet criticisms and misunderstandings of ecocentrism that have emerged out of the dialogue between ecocentric and anthropocentric emancipatory theorists. I also assess the internal theoretical coherence of each synthesis, critically examine theoretical claims on the relationship between social domination and ecological degradation, and draw out and assess the political priorities that flow from these claims.

Before commencing my examination of the major strands of emancipatory ecopolitical thought, however, it will be helpful to explain and clarify the political terminology that I adopt and to say something about the chapter organization that follows. In particular, a preliminary discussion and clarification of the term

"socialism" is needed given that there exists a wide range of potential syntheses of ecological and socialist thought, not all of which go by the name of "ecosocialism" and not all of which properly belong within the spectrum of emancipatory ecopolitical thought. Of course, characterizing socialism (which is sometimes appropriately referred to as "a mansion with many rooms") is a hazardous undertaking given that the ideals, boundaries, intended agents, and institutional forms of socialism are all highly contested matters. As a very general first approximation, socialism may be characterized negatively by virtue of its critique of, though not always total opposition to, the social and economic order spawned by capitalism together with its indictment of possessive individualism, the ideology of capitalism. Socialists therefore usually seek either alternatives to, or at least the systematic amelioration of, what they see as the impersonal and socially unjust operations of the market. Beyond general characterizations of this kind, it is impossible to formulate a succinct, positive definition of socialism that is able to encompass and reconcile the many varieties of socialist thought. This is because socialism contains deep divisions as to whether it is essentially a scientific doctrine or an egalitarian ethical impulse. It is equally divided as to whether it represents the antithesis of liberalism, and hence a rupture with that tradition, or its democratic fulfilment, and hence part of the same cultural universe as liberalism. (Accordingly, it is possible to discern modern, anti-modern, and post-modern tendencies within socialist thought.) It is also divided as to whether it is a rational, organized response to the disorder of capitalism, and hence the triumph of Reason in the form of "rational planning," or a libertarian movement that is concerned with self-directedness within a decentralized community setting, and hence simply the triumph of politically and economically dispossessed peoples. This latter current of socialist thought merges with the anarchist critique of capitalism and the state (particularly on the theme of producer democracy). Finally, while many socialist theorists advocate state or communal ownership of the means of production, others are content to focus on developing (usually centralized) mechanisms of wealth redistribution, thereby leaving wealth generation to private enterprise. In short,

"socialism is not a simple thing, but a range, an arena, an open texture, a self-contradiction."[1]

Many of the tensions and contradictions to be found in socialist thought in general are also to be found in the various syntheses of socialism and ecology discussed in this inquiry, an inheritance that has made the task of elaborating a concise definition of ecosocialism an equally hazardous undertaking. For example, while most emancipatory ecopolitical theorists who call themselves ecosocialists share the Green critique of the growth consensus of existing communist regimes, their relationship to the theoretical traditions of orthodox Marxism, neo-Marxism, non-Marxist socialist theory, the Western trade union movement, the conventional social democratic political parties of the West, the New Left, and new social movements is more complex and cannot be generalized. Similarly, while most ecosocialists are critical of social democratic parties and trade unions in the West, they differ in the extent to which they argue for the retention of some kind of link with these organizations, whether by establishing a new political alliance or simply opening up a critical dialogue within party or union circles. Such links (whatever their nature and extent) are considered to be important by ecosocialists not simply from a strategic point of view; they also reflect a general philosophical commitment to extend the project of social and economic democracy. As we shall see, where most ecosocialists differ from conventional social democratic parties and trade union organizations is in their recognition of "ecological constraints" and their concern to bring resource consumption down to a level that is compatible with global justice.

In view of the impossibility of elaborating a positive, exhaustive, and concise definition of socialism, and hence of ecosocialism, I have chosen to proceed instead on the basis of a convenient relational classification of three loose, "extended families" of socialism that are characterized simply by their relationship to Marxism. (I use the analogy of extended families because it allows for some degree of intermarriage with other currents of social and political thought.) I have adopted this

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1. R. N. Berki, Socialism (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1975), p. 16.

approach not in order to pay tribute to Marx's towering influence on socialist thought (indeed, as Wright notes, his attempts to eradicate socialist pluralism by securing for Marxism an "organizational and theoretical monopoly" have done much to restrain the progressive evolution of socialist ideas) but rather to emphasize the degree of unlearning of orthodox Marxist premises that is needed for the re-assertion of an ecologically enlightened emancipatory socialism.[2] Such an approach will, of course, require a brief elaboration of orthodox Marxist tenets as a general benchmark for comparison (although no emancipatory ecopolitical theorist in fact unreservedly subscribes to these tenets). In line with this general trajectory away from orthodox Marxism, then, I have organized the relevant strands of ecosocialism that will be discussed into the following three family groupings: orthodox Marxism, neo-Marxism, and democratic socialism (which is largely, though not exclusively, post-Marxist).

The first socialist grouping, which corresponds to the scientific socialism of the "mature Marx" and Engels (as well as Bolshevism), is discussed in Chapter 4. Basic to this orthodox doctrine is the view that the urban proletariat is the historically destined agent of the revolutionary transformation of the capitalist relations of production, which will lead to the abolition of private property and its replacement with common ownership of the means of production. The historical materialism of this strand of Marxism gives it its "scientific" flavour, since it is seen to be based on a rigorous analysis of the "laws of development" of capitalism (hence its rejection of nonscientific forms of socialism as utopian, ahistorical, and idealist). Ecopolitical theorists who defend this perspective argue that the development of the capitalist forces of production should be actively encouraged so as to provide the technological means for the "rational mastery of nature," which would thereby see an end to the ecological crisis. Followers of this approach will be called "orthodox eco-Marxists." It must be emphasized that orthodox eco-Marxism does not properly belong to the emancipatory ecopolitical spectrum since it remains wedded to the same cornucopian

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2. Anthony Wright, Socialisms: Why Socialists Disagree - and What They Disagree About (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. ix.

assumptions as liberalism (as I showed in Chapter 1). My discussion of orthodox eco-Marxism in Chapter 4 is presented merely as a benchmark by which we may compare how far emancipatory ecopolitical theorists who draw on socialism have moved away from the ecologically problematic assumptions of the mature Marx.

The second (and, in this context, more relevant) family of socialism is a significant sub-set of the Western Marxist (or Neo-Marxist) heritage, which encompasses that body of Marxist thought borne in the 1920s as a doctrinal challenge to Soviet Marxism, particularly the deterministic historical materialism of Bolshevik philosophy.[3] According to Merquior, what unites the diverse writers under this broad rubric is not so much their political allegiances as the shift in their theoretical attention from economic history and the politics of class struggle (the "base") to culture and ideology (the "superstructure"). In short, "they preferred to regard Marxism not as a science but as critique."[4] They also generally adopt a humanist view of knowledge (with many looking to the more philosophical writings of the young Marx in The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844), a theoretical eclecticism (often including a "return to Hegel"), and are highly critical of capitalist modernity. Although they range from pragmatism to idealism, empiricism, experientialism, and pure critique, they share, as Gorman has put it, certain "blood traits that are the irreplaceable core of Marxism" - they are dialectical (i.e., they examine the dynamic connections binding particulars to a totality), anti-capitalist, advocate socialism (i.e., public ownership and rational control of the productive apparatus), and trace their theory to relevant parts of Marx's original texts.[5]

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3. J. G. Merquior, Western Marxism (London: Paladin, 1986), p. 2. Robert Gorman adopts a similar classification under the rubric "neo-Marxism," noting that it is a heterogeneous body of thought "born in Marx's ambiguous legacy and nurtured by practical exigencies" and containing many internal fissures. What unites neo-Marxists, however, is their "nonmaterialism" and their departure from Soviet style orthodox Marxism. (See Robert A. Gorman, ed., Biographical Dictionary of Neo-Marxism [Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985]) p. 21.)

4. Merquior, Western Marxism, p. 5.

5. Gorman, Dictionary of Neo-Marxism, pp. 21-22.

In addition to the discussion of orthodox eco-Marxism in Chapter 4, I also discuss in that chapter those emancipatory ecopolitical theorists who have sought theoretical inspiration from Marx's early humanist writings. These theorists will accordingly be referred to as "humanist eco-Marxists" (to distinguish them from their orthodox cousins, who seek illumination from the writings of the mature Marx). While the influential Critical Theory of the Frankfurt school also forms an important tributary of the humanist current in Western Marxism, it is treated separately in Chapter 5 by virtue of its innovative critique of instrumental reason and the domination of nature (I do, however, include a preliminary discussion of Marcuse's reading of the young Marx in Chapter 4).

The third family of ecologically informed socialist theory, which is the most influential family of ecosocialism in Green circles, draws on the broad democratic socialist (or "ethical socialist") tradition and will therefore be referred to as "democratic ecosocialism."[6] This broad family may be variously described as post-Marxist or non-Marxist insofar as it is highly critical of orthodox Marxism (and much Western Marxism) but is not anti-Marxist. That is, many theorists within this tradition occasionally draw on Western Marxist insights (without accepting Marxism as a whole) alongside other older traditions and contemporary strands of socialist

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6. There is considerable confusion among political theorists as to what distinguishes a democratic socialist from a social democrat, although it is generally agreed that the former is "more leftist" than the latter. Roger Scruton, for example, defines democratic socialism as "Socialism pursued by democratic means - e.g., through persuasion of the electorate in a state ruled by representative institutions" (Roger Scruton, A Dictionary of Political Thought [London: Pan Books, 1983], p. 118). Although Scruton goes on to state that democratic socialism should not be confused with social democracy, his definition of social democracy is substantially similar to that of democratic socialism: "Now [i.e., nowadays], social democrat denotes, roughly, any view, with some elements of socialist belief, which seeks reform rather than revolution ... and which adheres to the principles of democratic election" (p. 432). To the extent that democratic socialism is distinguishable from social democracy, according to Scruton, it is that the former is somehow "more socialist" than social democracy. Similarly, Anthony Wright has described democratic socialists as "social democrats who really mean it" (Wright, Socialisms, p. 4). According to Wright, whereas social democrats merely seek to reform (in the sense of ameliorate the effects of) capitalism, democratic socialists seek to re-organize capitalism along more democratic and participatory lines. I will adopt Wright's clearer delineation for the purposes of this inquiry, although it must be noted that the differences between democratic socialism and social democracy, especially in practice, are mainly differences of degree rather than kind.

thought, including utopian socialism, the self-management ideas of the New Left, and socialist feminism. (This family is distinguishable from anarchism, however, in its argument for the retention of a democratically accountable state.) Democratic socialists are critical of both Western social democracy (which has not managed to transcend "welfare capitalism") and Second and Third world communism (which they reject as authoritarian and undemocratic) and assert instead a socialism that aspires toward production for genuine human need, self-management, and participatory democracy.[7] Democratic socialists thus recognize and seek to carry forward the substantial achievements of the liberal parliamentary democratic tradition (and are therefore not prepared to sacrifice democratic values in order to hasten the reform process). Nonetheless, they are critical of the strategy of most Western labour and social democratic parties for merely seeking to "milk the capitalist cow."[8] They argue that such a strategy has meant that most labour and social democratic parties have become dependent on private capitalist growth to fund their social welfare programmes.[9] This has meant that there is a real limit to the extent to which such parties are prepared to intervene in, or otherwise seek control of, private investment decisions in order to fulfil their social reform aspirations. Yet democratic socialists are concerned not only to reduce the dependency of the State on the market but also the personal dependency of welfare recipients on the State by seeking ways of moving beyond the corporatist welfare state to a decentralized participatory democracy where producers and citizens have a more direct say in the organization of their work and community life. Democratic socialists accept liberal political freedoms but argue that

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7. It should also be noted that even those theorists (discussed in Chapter 4) who draw on orthodox Marxist theory also distance themselves from "actually existing socialism."

8. Wright, Socialisms, p. 120.

9. This kind of social democracy is considered by democratic socialists to be little different from the ameliorative reformism of "welfare capitalism." Welfare capitalism, according to Cunningham, is "a society with nonnegligible and persistent constraints on capitalists, most of which are capitalist serving in the long run (for example by providing purchasing power or by dampening social unrest), even if there are a few truly countercapitalist constraints." See Frank Cunningham, Democratic Theory and Socialism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 84.

they are illusory without economic democracy and relative material equality. This kind of socialism may thus be seen as the radical democratic fulfilment of the liberal tradition rather than its antithesis; it seeks not only to call liberalism to account, by showing that its ideals cannot be realized under "late" capitalism, but also to outbid its promise, by suggesting alternative allocative arrangements that are better able to realize these ideals. Most of the emancipatory ecopolitical theorists who call themselves, or who I identify as, "ecosocialists" (chief among whom are Boris Frankel, Martin Ryle, and Raymond Williams) have emerged from, and have considerably revised, this broader tradition of democratic socialism. In Chapter 6 I will be arguing that "democratic ecosocialism" is the most promising body of ecologically inspired socialist thought in the emancipatory debates, although it falls short of an ecocentric perspective and, accordingly, a considerable broadening of its basic premises is required.

It must be emphasized that the above loose family divisions are merely a convenient means of organizing and discussing the various ecological/socialist syntheses that feed into emancipatory ecopolitical thought. For example, many of the concepts elaborated by humanist eco-Marxists reappear in the ecosocialist ideas discussed in Chapter 6. In this respect, neo-Marxism and democratic socialism may be seen as close theoretical relatives (having much more in common with each other than with orthodox Marxism). The major difference between them is that the contribution of those who take a more explicitly humanist eco-Marxist perspective has tended to be by way of philosophical reflection and critique (drawing, inter alia, on the young Marx's theory of alienation) whereas those ecosocialists who draw on the general democratic socialist tradition have tended to be more directly concerned with developing concrete and feasible alternatives to capitalism that will further the goal of human emancipation and ecological reconstruction. One significant exception to this generalization is Andre Gorz, who draws directly on the writings of the young Marx but also outlines a detailed dual economy for an ecosocialist society. Gorz's ideas are discussed in both Chapters 4 and 6.

For the purposes of this inquiry, I treat anarchism as standing outside the general socialist tradition rather than as a sub-set of that tradition (despite their shared anti-capitalist leanings) and I categorize as anarchist all those emancipatory ecopolitical theorists who seek to abolish and/or by-pass the nation state and confer maximum political and economic autonomy on decentralized local communities. Emancipatory ecopolitical theorists who adopt an anarchist perspective are discussed in Chapter 7. It is noteworthy, however, that some of the more influential ecoanarchist theorists that I discuss in Chapter 7 (most notably Murray Bookchin and Rudolf Bahro) have generally been schooled in the Marxist tradition, are intimately familiar with its categories and arguments, yet have, for various reasons, rejected Marxism. To the extent that Marxism is discussed by these theorists, it is usually as a foil by which they contrast their own theoretical position, which they argue is more attuned to ecological reality and the concerns of new social movements than Marxist-based approaches. (Indeed, Bookchin and Bahro have become two of Marxism's harshest critics.) By definition, ecoanarchists differ from ecosocialists on the question of the role to be played by the State in an ecological society. Significantly, too, they adopt a much more radical ecological posture than ecosocialists.

The feminist contribution to emancipatory ecopolitical thought is largely concerned to explore the connections between the domination of women and the domination of nonhuman nature and it generally proceeds by way of a philosophical, psychological, and ecological critique of patriarchy. Although it does not directly address the question of political forms, its strong anti-hierarchical perspective means that it has much more theoretical sympathy with ecoanarchism than ecosocialism.

Chapters 5 through to 8 represent a general movement away from orthodox Marxism and state socialism and toward decentralized communitarian and anarchist political solutions; this progression of chapters also happens to correspond loosely with a general movement away from anthropocentrism and toward ecocentrism, although in both cases there is some unevenness and overlap. This parallel movement of ideas toward ecocentrism and anarchism is, of course, a highly significant one in

terms of the key question posed in this inquiry (i.e., what political tradition is most compatible with an ecocentric emancipatory perspective?). However, I also argue that the two termini of this parallel movement of ideas - ecoanarchism and ecofeminism - do not represent the only or most appropriate solutions to this key question. It will be shown that although ecoanarchism and a revised ecofeminism provide the most appropriate cultural perspective for an ecocentric society, ecoanarchism does not provide (and ecofeminism does not address the matter of) the most appropriate decision-making framework for an ecocentric society.

Chapter 4

The Impossibility of an Ecocentric Marxism

Introduction

The pressing nature of the environmental crisis and the growing political prominence of the environmental movement and, more recently, the broader Green movement has prompted a number of Marxist theorists to turn their attention to the relationship between environmental degradation, capitalism, and social justice.[1] This somewhat belated entry into the ecopolitical debate marks the beginning of an important new chapter in the development of Marxist thought, the outcome of which may well determine the extent to which it is able to exert a continuing influence on political movements in the closing decade of this century and beyond. I say "new chapter" here because environmental degradation has not been a traditional concern of Marxism. Indeed, it has generally been considered a mere epiphenomenon of capitalism rather than important in its own right - something that, in any event, will be brought under rational social control in a socialist society.[2] This has been reflected in the widespread tendency among Western Marxists, especially in the "early" days of modern environmental concern (i.e., the late 1960s and early 1970s), to dismiss environmentalism as an elitist preoccupation of the middle class who can "afford" to worry about such matters. In particular, calls by radical environmentalists and Green parties for the curbing of economic growth have been met with suspicion, and in many cases, open hostility on the grounds of a rejection by Marxists of the idea that there are nonsocial limits to growth along with a concern for the inequitable social consequences that were presumed to flow from a scaling down of production.

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1. See, for example, the new U. S. journal Capitalism, Nature, Socialism: A Journal of Socialist Ecology, which began in 1988.

2. K. J. Walker, "Ecological Limits and Marxian Thought," Politics 14 (1979): 29-46 at p. 29. Walker has argued that the neglect of ecological problems by Marxist scholars may be largely attributed to their acceptance of Marx's rejection of the limits to growth arguments of Malthus.

Recent attempts to address Marxism's traditional neglect of environmental issues have been conducted on three major levels: first, somewhat defensively, by way of an ideological critique of the allegedly elitist campaigns of "bourgeois environmentalists";[3] second, a re-reading of the writings of Marx and Engels in order to discern their attitude toward nature and technology and find out how and to what extent they addressed the environmental problems of their day;[4] and, third, an inquiry into the question as to whether Marxism can be developed in such a way as to address constructively the environmental crisis in terms that are relevant to the conditions of the late twentieth century.[5] This last endeavour has been considered important by such scholars from the point of view of opening up a constructive dialogue on environmental problems with communist countries (where over one third of the

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3. The classic illustration of this kind of critique is provided by Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "A Critique of Political Ecology," New Left Review 84 (1974): 3-31. Enzensberger's critique has been either adopted or quoted with approval by many Marxist critics of the environmental movement as well as by "Red/Green" theorists who are broadly sympathetic with Marxism and/or the labour movement. See, for example, Melanie Beresford, "Doomsayers and Eco-nuts: A Critique of the Ecology Movement," Politics 12 (1971): 98-106; David Pepper, The Roots of Modern Environmentalism (London: Croom Helm, 1984); Michael Redclift, Sustainable Development: Exploring the Contradictions (London: Methuen, 1987), especially pp. 45-51 (indeed, both Pepper [p. 175] and Redclift [p. 45] describe Enzensberger's critique as "seminal" and both quote from it extensively); Robert D. Holsworth, "Recycling Hobbes: The Limits to Political Ecology," Massachusetts Review 20 (1979): 9-40; David Sills, "The Environmental Movement and its Critics," Human Ecology 3 (1975): 1-41; and Janna Thompson, "The Death of a Contradiction: Marxism, the Environment and Social Change," Intervention 17 (1983): 7-26.

4. For example, Howard Parsons, Marx and Engels on Ecology (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1978); Donald Lee, "On the Marxian View of the Relationship between Man and Nature," Environmental Ethics 2 (1980): 3-16; and Michael Clow, "Alienation from Nature: Marx and Environmental Politics," Alternatives 10 (1982): 36-40.

5. For example, Parsons, Marx and Engels on Ecology; Lee, "On the Marxian View"; Charles Tolman, "Karl Marx, Alienation, and the Mastery of Nature," Environmental Ethics 3 (1981): 63-74; Raymond Williams, Socialism and Ecology (London: Socialist Environment and Resources Association, n.d.); Thompson, "The Death of a Contradiction"; Adrienne Farago, "Environmentalism and the Left," Urban Policy and Research 3 (1985): 11-15; Neil Smith, Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984); Clow, "Alienation from Nature"; Redclift, Sustainable Development, especially at pp. 45-51 and 173-80; James O'Connor, "Capitalism, Nature, Socialism: A Theoretical Introduction," Capitalism, Nature, Socialism 1 (1988): 11-38; and James O'Connor, "Introduction to Issue Number Two: Socialism and Ecology," Capitalism, Nature, Socialism 2 (1989): 5-11.

world's population resides) as well as with the labour movement within the liberal democracies of the West. Significantly, some of the Marxist scholars who embarked on this new area of inquiry became increasingly critical of Marxism and found themselves rapidly discarding central planks of classical Marxist theory (such as the revolutionary potential of the working class and the importance of technological development in facilitating social emancipation). In some cases this has occurred to the point where these theorists have either taken on a new ecosocialist label (Andre Gorz) or become recognized as post-Marxists (Rudolf Bahro).[6] This theoretical shift has been sharpest among those former Marxist scholars who are now actively involved in the Green movement as ecoanarchists, such as Rudolf Bahro and Murray Bookchin, both of whom have become two of Marxism's staunchest critics.[7] These more radical revisions and departures will, however, be explored in Chapters 7 and 8. My concern in this chapter is with the theoretical contributions of those scholars who have found sufficient illumination in the original writings of Marx (whether "early" or "late") to enable them to develop a Marxist explanation of, and response to, the contemporary ecological crisis.

The initial Marxist entry into the environmental debate may be seen just as much as an attempt to come to terms with the popularity and growing political influence of the environmental movement as an attempt to come to terms with the real problems associated with environmental degradation. Yet the injection of various Marxist perspectives into ecopolitical debates has also led to a fruitful political dialogue between the labour and environmental movements, which has, in turn, served to challenge and widen both perspectives. Moreover, the increasing public prominence of the science of ecology alongside new developments in the growing

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6. Andre Gorz, Ecology as Politics, trans. Patsy Vigderman and Jonathon Cloud (London: Pluto Press, 1980); Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class: An Essay in Post-Industrial Socialism (London: Pluto Press, 1982); Rudolf Bahro, Socialism and Survival (London: Heretic Books, 1982); and Bahro, Building the Green Movement (London: Heretic/GMP, 1986).

7. See, for example, Rudolf Bahro, Socialism and Survival; Murray Bookchin, "Marxism as Bourgeois Sociology," and "On Neo-Marxism, Bureaucracy and the Body Politic," in Toward an Ecological Society (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980), pp. 193-210 and 213-48.

field of environmental philosophy, both of which underscore the importance of preserving wilderness and ecological diversity, have thrown down significant new challenges to Marxist theory. Indeed, I intend to show that it has been the ecocentric arguments for wilderness preservation that Marxist scholars have found to be the furthest removed from their traditional concerns and consequently the hardest to assimilate into their theoretical framework. Such arguments directly challenge the essentially human-centred philosophical roots of Marxism in arguing for the preservation of the nonhuman world for its own sake.

Although the Marxist critique of the class character of environmentalism has formed an important part of ecopolitical debates in the West, I have addressed these charges elsewhere and do not intend to evaluate them again here.[8] My main purpose in referring to these debates is simply to draw attention to the essentially reactive and defensive character and tone of the Left's initial entry into the environmental debates. To many Marxists and working class sympathizers, the environmental movement was initially perceived more as a threat to the political and theoretical terrain staked out by the Left - as a backsliding toward conservatism - than a harbinger of novel and progressive political ideas. One of the concerns in this early project of ideological "unmasking" was to denigrate and dismiss the new preoccupation with environmental issues that surfaced from the early 1960s in an attempt to reassert the basic political goals of the Left - the social control of the means of production and the creation of a classless society. To the extent that the gravity of the environmental crisis was acknowledged, it was generally treated as secondary to the questions of distributional impact.

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8. It will suffice to point out that many of these Marxist critiques proceed on the basis of (i) an ill-informed understanding of the social composition of the environmental movement, (ii) a crude class model of society (i.e., middle class capitalists versus the working class) that ignores many significant cleavages within the middle class between say, the New Class and the "business class," and (iii) a characterization of environmentalism that either ignores or fails to grasp the radical implications of much environmental protest. See Robyn Eckersley, "The Environment Movement as Middle-Class Elitism: A Critical Analysis," Regional Journal of Social Issues 18 (1986): 24-36, and Eckersley, "Green Politics and the New Class: Selfishness or Virtue?" Political Studies 37 (1989): 205-23.

However, it should also be acknowledged that many of the Marxists who engaged in these early critiques have acknowledged the limitations of the Left's initial intervention in the environmental debate and its failure to address constructively the concrete problems of environmental degradation. As Enzensberger expressed it, the Left's "characteristic gesture of 'unmasking' can turn into a smug ritual, if attention remains fixed on the mask instead of what is revealed beneath it."[9] It is now essential, he argues, that Western Marxist scholars turn their attention to the ecological contradictions wrought by industrialization, including uncontrolled population growth, depletion of nonrenewable energy resources and metals, growing disturbances to the water cycle, the increasing scarcity of arable land, and the many forms of pollution (e.g., air, water, thermal, and "psychic"). Despite the disagreement concerning the projected trends in these ecological disturbances, Enzensberger has cautioned that if the ecologists' prophecy of impending catastrophe cannot be refuted, then, as a kind of Pascal's wager, "it will be heuristically necessary to base any thinking about the future on what it has to say."[10]

This chapter, then, will seek to evaluate the more positive task undertaken by a growing number of Marxist scholars of developing a specifically Marxist response to the environmental crisis. Such an evaluation is necessary since Marxism now stands not simply as a source of external criticism of the Green movement; there are many who argue, for a variety of reasons, that the Green movement ought to embrace a Marxist perspective as an alternative to what is seen as the utopianism, idealism, and "voluntarism" of much Green theorizing. What is needed, these critics argue, is a more materialist approach that is cognizant of the relationship between class and the inequitable impact of environmental degradation and is prepared to directly challenge institutionalized power relations in society.[11] Indeed, for some

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9. Enzensberger, "A Critique of Political Ecology," p. 18.

10. Ibid., p. 28.

11. This general kind of argument abounds in the work of "Red Green" theorists who remain sympathetic to Marxism. See, for example, Joe Weston, ed., Red and Green: The New Politics of the Environment (London: Pluto Press, 1986); Pepper, The Roots of Modern Environmentalism; Frankie Ashton, Green Dreams, Red Realities,

Green theorists, particularly in Europe, Western Marxism has served as the theoretical starting point for their analysis of the ecological crisis.[12] Yet it is also the case that most of the more ecologically oriented emancipatory ecopolitical theorists (e.g., Bahro, Bookchin, Capra, Porritt, Sale, Spretnak, and Tokar) have not found it necessary to endorse Marxist theory (revised or otherwise) in order to acknowledge, say, the importance of an equitable sharing of the costs of environmental reforms or the many ways in which the profit motive and the dynamics of capital accumulation have contributed to our current environmental ills. Indeed, I will be arguing that such an endorsement is entirely inappropriate since it involves inheriting an intellectual legacy that is entirely out of keeping with the ecocentric perspective that is defended in this inquiry.[13]

As a background to the general trajectory away from Marxism that I foreshadowed in the introduction to Part II of this inquiry, this chapter will explore the re-reading of Marx and Engels' writings that has been undertaken in the wake of the ecological crisis. It will begin by clarifying the general position of the early and

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N.A.T.T.A. Discussion Paper no. 2, Alternative Technology Group (Milton Keynes, Bucks. U.K.: The Open University, 1985); Beresford, "Doomsayers and Eco-nuts"; Farago, "Environmentalism and the Left"; and Boris Frankel, "Beyond Abstract Environmentalism," Island Magazine, Autumn 1989, pp. 22-25.

12. Two prominent examples in West Germany are Thomas Ebermann and Rainer Trampert. For a discussion of the relationship between Marxism and Die Grunen see John Ely, "Marxism and Green Politics in West Germany," Thesis Eleven 13 (1986): 22-38, and Werner Hulsberg, The German Greens: A Social and Political Profile (London: Verso, 1988).

13. Major ecopolitical critiques of Marxism include Colin Fry, "Marxism Versus Ecology," The Ecologist 6 (1976): 328-32; Michael Zimmerman, "Marx and Heidegger on the Technological Domination of Nature," Philosophy Today 23 (1979): 99-112; Val Routley, "On Karl Marx as an Environmental Hero," Environmental Ethics 3 (1981): 237-44; Brian Easlea, Science and Sexual Oppression: Patriarchy's Confrontation with Woman and Nature (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1981); Isaac D. Balbus, Marxism and Domination: A Neo-Hegelian, Feminist, Psychoanalytical Theory of Sexual, Political, and Technological Liberation (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982); Rudolf Bahro, Socialism and Survival (London: Heretic Books, 1982); Hwa Yol Jung, "Marxism, Ecology, and Technology," Environmental Ethics 5 (1983): 169-71; M. R. Redclift, "Marxism and the Environment: A View from the Periphery," in Political Action and Social Identity: Class, Locality and Ideology, eds. Gareth Rees, Janet Bujra, Paul Littlewood, Howard Newby, and Teresa L. Rees (London: Macmillan, 1985), pp. 191-211; Ted Benton, "Humanism = Speciesism: Marx on Humans and Animals," Radical Philosophy (Autumn 1988): 4-18; and John Clark, "Marx's Inorganic Body," Environmental Ethics 11 (1989): 243-58.

mature Marx and will then explore attempts by what I have called "orthodox eco-Marxists" and "humanist eco-Marxists" to develop a contemporary understanding of, and response to, the environmental crisis on the basis of this re-reading.[14] It is important to remember that my discussion of orthodox Marxism (and orthodox eco-Marxism) is presented as a foil or point of departure for, rather than as an example of, emancipatory ecopolitical theory.

The Theoretical Roots

Although Marx was only marginally concerned with environmental degradation in his day and although he did not present a systematic theory of humanity's relationship to nature, there exist numerous passages in his wide-ranging oeuvre that enable his position on both of these matters to be easily discerned.[15] It must also be remembered that Marx formed his ideas at a time when he could not have been expected to anticipate the extent of global ecological degradation that we now face. It is indeed testimony to the stature of Marx and the hold of his ideas that scholars should still be seeking illumination and direction from his writings in respect of problems that he regarded in his day as epiphenomenal (i.e., ecological degradation was seen as a mere by-product of capitalism and as not worthy of special attention in the scheme of things). Of course, many Green theorists consider this latter point to be a good reason in itself to abandon Marxism as being ill-equipped to tackle contemporary environmental problems.

The overriding sense in which Marx characterized nature was as a medium for human labour, as the means by which the power of the human labourer could be

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14. Michael Lowy has referred to these two groupings as representing the "cold" and "warm" streams of Marxism. See Michael Lowy, "The Romantic and the Marxist Critique of Modern Civilization," Theory and Society 16 (1987): 891-904.

15. See Alfred Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx (London: New Left Books, 1971), p. 17. Schmidt, in seeking to clarify the concept of nature in dialectical materialism, has noted that there "is no systematic Marxist theory of nature of such a kind as to be conscious of its own speculative implications" (ibid). However, he has sought to articulate Marx's position by bringing together the disparate themes concerning the concept of nature from the major phases of development of Marx's thought. Schmidt's book is very helpful in this respect, although it does not directly address the question of the relationship between Marx's concept of nature and the problem of ecological degradation.

revealed, or as Alfred Schmidt has summarized it, "as the means and the material of man's self-realization in history."[16] The nonhuman world, which Marx often referred to as "external nature," was first and foremost "the primary source of all instruments and objects of labour" and is variously described by him as a "laboratory," "the original tool house," or the "original larder."[17] Like Locke before him, Marx accepted the view that the mixing of human labour with external nature was an act of appropriation, that the product belonged to the labourer, indeed, revealed the power of the labourer since labour and its extension - technology - brought about what nature could not accomplish alone.[18] Although Marx saw humans as a part of (rather than separate from) nature, human labour was nonetheless seen as playing a pivotal and determinative role in nature's unfolding. Drawing on Hegel, Marx portrayed the labour process as a "metabolism" between humans and external nature with humans as Subject confronting external nature as Object in a dialectical movement that led to the transformation of both humans and the nonhuman world. Humanity and external nature were characterized as two indivisible "moments" in nature's self development.[19]

In tracing the development of Marx's theoretical perspective vis-a-vis nature, it is possible to find both continuities and discontinuities between the writings of the young (i.e., pre-1845) Marx and the mature and more economically preoccupied Marx of Capital.[20] In the so-called "Paris Manuscripts" (i.e., The Economic and

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16. Ibid., p. 154.

17. Ibid., pp. 15 and 81.

18. This, observes Castoriadis, was also an idea developed by Aristotle: "If 'the origination of being or becoming resides in the maker and not in the thing made,' as Aristotle says about techne, then the only 'revelation' which can be involved is the revelation of the producer as this origin of the principle of being or becoming. This is, more or less, what Marx was to say twenty-three centuries later." Cornelius Castoriadis, Crossroads in the Labyrinth, trans. Kate Soper and Martin H. Ryle (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1978), p. 233.

19. Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx, p. 79.

20. David McLellan in his introduction to The Grundrisse (see Karl Marx, The Grundrisse, ed. and trans. by David McLellan [New York: Harper & Row, 1971], p. 14) has stressed the continuity in Marx's work and has rejected the idea that there is a radical break between the young and the old Marx on the basis of Marx's

Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844), Marx referred to the labour process as effecting the progressive "humanization" of nature and "naturalization" of humanity. Nature was described as "the inorganic body" of humanity that had been increasingly assimilated, through work, into an "organic" part of humanity.[21] In his essay on "Estranged Labour," Marx described humanity's transformation of the external world through labour as the means by which humanity realized its "species being" (or human essence) - a notion that Marx took from Ludwig Feuerbach. Feuerbach had argued in his famous "inversion" of Hegel's idealism that the "subject" of history was neither the Absolute Idea nor the individual self but rather nature rendered self-conscious in humanity taken as a whole.[22] Feuerbach was both an atheist and a materialist who regarded God as an alien and fictitious being to whom humans had attributed their essential powers, thereby impoverishing themselves. Religion and Hegel's idealist metaphysics were therefore both regarded as stages to be overcome in humanity's emergence out of nature since Feuerbach regarded humanity, not God, as the appropriate object of worship. According to Feuerbach, we realize our species being or human essence as our consciousness of ourselves expands, culminating in the overcoming of our alienation from ourselves and the realization of the unity of subject and object - humanity and nature. Marx, who considered Feuerbach's conception of humanity's relationship to nature to be too passive, considerably reworked Feuerbach's notion of self-estrangement on the basis of a different conception of

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abandonment of the idea of alienation. Rather, McLellan argues that "Marx's thought is best viewed as a continuing meditation on central themes broached in 1844, the high point of which meditation occurred in 1857-8" with the publication of The Grundrisse (ibid., p. 12). McLellan argues that this work, which was written after the Paris Manuscripts and before Capital, is the most fundamental of all Marx's writings since it synthesizes all of the major strands of Marx's thought. In particular, it maintains continuity with the themes of alienation and humanity's dialectical relationship to nature from the Paris Manuscripts while also containing the first elaboration of Marx's mature economic theory. See also David McLellan, The Thought of Karl Marx: An Introduction (London: Macmillan, 1971), pp. 70-71.

21. Karl Marx, The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, trans. Martin Milligan and ed. Dirk J. Struik (New York: International Publishers, 1964), p. 112. This work was not published in full in Europe until the 1930s and did not become generally available in the United States until the 1960s.

22. For a general discussion of Feurbach's ideas and their influence on the young Marx, see Dirk J. Struik's "Introduction" to The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, p. 15 and following.

human essence that was based on the dynamics of the labour process. Hegel's Geist or spirit was thus replaced by the concrete activity of homo faber. Marx argued that the relationship between humanity and external nature is a transformative one whereby both humans (and their needs) and external nature are changed as the labour process expands humanity's productive powers. As Alex Callinicos has put it, for Marx "man's species being consists, not in his self-consciousness, but in his objective relation to the labour-process which provides the framework of man's interaction with his environment."[23]

According to Marx, whereas (nonhuman) animals produce one-sidedly, that is, only for their immediate needs, humans produces universally, that is, even when free from physical need "and only truly [produce] in freedom thereof."[24] Marx thus saw the transformation of nature through unalienated labour as the means toward human self-realization:

> It is just in his work upon the objective world, therefore, that man first really proves himself to be a species being. This production is his active species life. Through and because of this production, nature appears as his work and his reality. The object of labour is, therefore, the objectification of man's species life: for he duplicates himself not only, as in consciousness, intellectually, but also actively, in reality, and therefore he contemplates himself in a world that he has created. In tearing away from man the object of his production, therefore, estranged labour tears from him his species life, his real objectivity as a member of the species and transforms his advantage over animals into the disadvantage that his inorganic body, nature, is taken away from him.[25]

Marx argued that alienated labour degrades to a mere means of physical existence what might otherwise have been spontaneous, free human activity. As a result, humans become estranged from their labour and its product, which confronts them as an alien other at the behest of the masters of labour - the owners and controllers of capital. Marx saw this as also leading to the estrangement of humans from

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23. Alex Callinicos, Marxism and Philosophy (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), p. 38. Both Feuerbach and Marx were to retain, however, Hegel's conception of history as a dialectical process whereby progress can only be achieved via the resolution of the tension between opposites, i.e., the subject can only develop by first experiencing a state of alienation or self-estrangement after which the subject is able to return to itself via the recognition that the alien objects that it has created are its own.

24. Marx, The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, p. 113.

25. Ibid, p. 114.

themselves, from their fellow humans, from nature, and from their species being.[26] Marx's solution to the problem of alienated labour was the revolutionary transformation of the institutions of wage labour and private property via the expropriation by the proletariat of the capitalist means of production - a transformation that Marx envisaged as paving the way for a fully social mastery of nature.

Marx's treatment of humans as homo faber is a central feature of the antagonistic dialectic between humanity and nature set out in these early writings. Labour and its extension - technology - were seen not only as a means to survival but also as the road to human self-realization. History was seen as the progressive humanization of nature and naturalization of humanity resulting in an ever greater equivalence between humanity and nature (i.e., where nature appeared as increasingly made rather than given, domesticated rather than wild). Communism was to be that stage where individuals would live in a classless society and be free to engage in self-determining activity since they would no longer be dominated by the functional economic imperatives of capitalism, the commands of a dominant class, or external nature. It would also be that stage where the human/external nature dialectic would be reconciled via the complete "humanization" of nature. Through technological innovation and automation, and the subordination of economic and natural processes, humans would thus recover time in which to enjoy freedom beyond the dull compulsion of labour.[27] In short, the young Marx believed that the "realm of necessity" would give way completely to the "realm of freedom" in a communist society.

While the notion of humans as homo faber remained a central theme in the writings of the mature Marx, he later came to the view "that the struggle of man with nature could be transformed but not abolished."[28] That is, the complete

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26. Ibid.

27. See William James Booth, "Gone Fishing: Making Sense of Marx's Concept of Communism," Political Theory 17 (1989): 205-22.

28. Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx, p. 76.

"reconciliation" with, or "humanization" of, nature was no longer considered possible because, although labour could be reduced to a minimum, Marx took the view that it could never be totally dispensed with. Although more and more areas of nature would come under human control through technological development, the antagonistic dialectic between humanity and nature would thus never be entirely resolved.[29]

Another significant change in emphasis in Marx's writings concerned the theme of alienation. In particular, from the time of Marx's first systematic presentation of historical materialism (namely, the critique, jointly authored with Engels, of German idealism and the Young Hegelians in The German Ideology [1986]) he no longer emphasized concepts such as "alienation" or "realization of the human essence."[30] Instead of explaining historical change in accordance with a philosophical concept of "species being," Marx became increasingly preoccupied with analysing the dynamics of the capitalist mode of production - an analysis that he referred to as an "objective" and "scientific" study of the unfolding of history. By the time of the publication of Capital, Marx had consolidated the now familiar distinction (which was frequently conflated in his earlier work) between the forces and relations of production. The forces (or means) of production were understood as the technological means with which humans control external nature in order to satisfy their needs, including tangible means such as machines as well as the more intangible means such as scientific knowledge, skills, and organizational layout. The relations of production referred to that ensemble of property, class, and legal arrangements that regulated the control and ownership of the production process and the distribution of its fruits. In capitalist societies, these relations of production were seen as relations of

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29. According to Schmidt, this is the fundamental distinction between a materialist and idealist dialectic: "In the Marxist dialectic, as in the Hegelian, what is non-identical with the Subject is overcome stage by stage. Greater and greater areas of nature come under human control. In Marx, however, and this distinguishes him from Hegel's ultimate idealism, the material of nature is never totally incorporated in the modes of its theoretical-practical appropriation" (ibid., p. 136).

30. Ibid., p. 129. As I noted above, an important exception to this generalization is The Grundrisse.

exploitation where unpaid surplus-labour was siphoned off to the capitalist class. Together, the forces and relations of production formed an articulated unity - the mode of production - that corresponded respectively to the technical and social determinants of humanity's interaction with external nature. According to Marx, the exploitation embodied in the capitalist relations of production could only be overcome by their overthrow. However, Marx's contempt for the relations of production did not extend to the rapidly expanding forces of production of his time. Quite the contrary, he extolled the new techniques of industrial society as the harbinger of freedom in creating the material and social preconditions for a socialist society. Total automation (considered a definite advance over handicrafts) would, under revolutionized relations of production, free the labourer to enter a qualitatively different relationship to the production process as overseer and regulator. Marx believed this process would lead to the development of more rounded individuals rather than specialized ones. As Schmidt puts it, the new society envisaged by the mature Marx

> ... is to benefit man alone, and there is no doubt that this is to be at the expense of external nature. Nature is to be mastered with gigantic technological aids, and the smallest possible expenditure of time and labour. It is to serve all men as the material substratum for all conceivable consumption goods.[31]

Marx also welcomed what he saw as the civilizing influence of technology and rejected nature romanticism and primitive cultures alike as "childish," "backward," and "reactionary" in opposing or otherwise showing no inclination toward technical progress. For example, he wrote:

> Hence the great civilizing influence of capital; its production of a stage of society in comparison to which all earlier ones appear as mere local developments of humanity and as nature-idolatry. For the first time, nature becomes purely an object for humankind, purely a matter of utility [i.e., instrumental value]; ceases to be recognized as a power for itself [i.e., as having intrinsic value]; and the theoretical discovery of its autonomous laws appears merely as a ruse so as to subjugate it under human needs, whether as an object of consumption or as a means of production.[32]

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31. Ibid., p. 155.

32. Karl Marx, Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy, trans. by Martin Nicholas (New York: Vintage Books, 1973), pp. 409-10.

Although Marx was alive to the contradictions in, and the destructive impact of, these developments he nonetheless fully endorsed the civilizing and technical accomplishments of the capitalist forces of production and had thoroughly absorbed the Victorian faith in scientific and technological progress as the means by which humans could outsmart and conquer nature. Indeed, Marx welcomed the challenge thrown down to humans by a "stingy" nature:

> This mode [i.e., capitalism] is based on the dominion of man over Nature. Where nature is too lavish, she "keeps him in hand, like a child in leading-strings." She does not impose upon him any necessity to develop himself.[33]

As Balbus has observed, Marx saw the development of science as the means by which humanity would seek to "discover nature's 'independent laws' not in order to respect, but rather in order to undermine, its independence from our existence."[34] Conquering nature in this way was welcomed as the means of human self-aggrandisement, for Marx considered that, once outsmarted by "man," external nature "becomes one of the organs of his activity, one that he annexes to his own bodily organs, adding stature to himself in spite of the Bible."[35]

Although Marx changed his view concerning the extent to which humanity would be able to master necessity, he consistently saw human freedom as inversely related to humanity's dependence on nature. Moreover, he argued that human freedom only properly began when mundane, necessary labour ceased:

> Freedom ... can only consist in socialised man, the associated producers, rationally regulating their interchange with Nature, bringing it under their common control, instead of being ruled by it as by the blind forces of Nature; and achieving this with the least expenditure of energy and under conditions most favourable to, and worthy of, their human nature. But it nonetheless still remains a realm of necessity. Beyond it begins that development of human energy which is an end in itself, the true realm of freedom, which, however, can blossom forth only with this realm of necessity at its basis.[36]

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33. Karl Marx, Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, ed. Friedrich Engels, trans. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, vol. 1: Capitalist Production (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1970), p. 513.

34. Isaac Balbus, Marxism and Domination, p. 272.

35. Marx, Capital, vol. 1. p. 179.

36. Karl Marx, Capital: A Critique of Political Economy, ed. Friedrich Engels, trans. Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling, vol. 3: The Process of Capitalist Production as a Whole (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1970), p. 820.

Engels also endorsed this understanding of the free communist human being. Once the capitalist relations of production had been overthrown, Engels believed that

> ... for the first time man, in a certain sense, is finally marked off from the rest of the animal kingdom, and emerges from mere animal conditions of existence into really human ones. The whole sphere of the conditions of life which environ man, and which have hitherto ruled man, now comes under the dominion and control of man, who for the first time becomes the real, conscious lord of Nature, because he has now become master of his own social organization ... It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom [my emphasis].[37]

In the Dialectics of Nature, Engels considered the essential distinction between humans and nonhumans to rest on humanity's ability not simply to use and change nature (something all animals do) but also to master it by making it serve humans ends.[38]

Yet Engels also shrewdly noted that we ought not "flatter ourselves overmuch on account of our human victories over nature. For each such victory takes its revenge on us."[39] In tracing the development of the forces of production, Engels showed a keen awareness of the many unintended ecological dislocations brought about by the labouring activities of humans in both industrial and pre-industrial times. Moreover, he observed that

> ... at every step we are reminded that we by no means rule over nature like a conqueror over a foreign people, like someone standing outside nature - but that we, with flesh, blood and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst, and that all our mastery of it consists in the fact that we have the advantage over all other creatures of being able to learn its laws and apply them correctly.[40]

Similarly, there are frequent passages in Capital where Marx also observes how the dynamics of capital accumulation led to the exploitation of the labourer and soil alike.[41] Yet both Marx and Engels continued to welcome the powerful forces of

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37. Friedrich Engels, "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific" in The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), pp. 637-38.

38. Friedrich Engels, Dialectics of Nature, trans. Clemens Dutt, in Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Collected Works, vol. 25 (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1987), p. 460.

39. Ibid., pp. 460-61.

40. Ibid., p. 461.

41. Capital, vol. 1, pp. 264-65 and 506 and Capital, vol. 3, p. 812-13.

production unleashed by capitalism for creating the "material conditions for a higher synthesis in the future" where further advances in the natural sciences would enable humans to predict and control the more remote consequences of their increasing incursions into nature.[42] In Marx's lexicon, emancipation meant being freed from both social and "natural" oppression (the latter made possible by the mastery of nature's laws, which included the control and containment of the unwanted ecological "side-effects" of human productive activity).

As we shall see, Marx's juxtaposition of freedom and necessity, the former corresponding to the mastery of social and natural constraints and the latter corresponding to subservience to social and natural constraints, has remained an enduring theme in eco-Marxist/ecosocialist thought, particularly in the work of Herbert Marcuse and Andre Gorz.

Although our concern here is with the writings of Marx and Engels, it is of interest to note how Marx's technological optimism and desire to master nature has been carried forward in the programmes and goals of twentieth century Marxist revolutionaries. Leon Trotsky, for example, in an extraordinary song of praise to humanity's technological capabilities, has argued:

> The present distribution of mountains and rivers, of fields, of meadows, of steppes, of forests, and of seashores, cannot be considered final. Man has already made changes in the map of nature that are not few or insignificant. But they are mere pupils' practice in comparison with what is coming. Faith merely promises to move mountains; but technology, which takes nothing "on faith," is actually able to cut down mountains and move them ... Through the machine, man in Socialist society will command nature in its entirety ...[43]

And on the population question, Fidel Castro has warned:

> In certain countries they are saying that only birth control provides a solution to the problem [of human population growth]. Only capitalists, the exploiters can speak like that; for no-one who is conscious of what man can achieve with the

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42. Capital, vol. 1, pp. 505-7.

43. Leon Trotsky, Literature and Revolution (Chicago: University of Michigan Press, 1960), pp. 251-52. For a more recent Soviet view, see Society and the Environment: A Soviet View (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), especially the essay by Yevgeny Fyodorov and Ilya Novik entitled "Ecological Aspects of Social Progress," pp. 37-55. Although these authors acknowledge the seriousness of ecological degradation, they continue to characterize it as a technical problem to be solved by further advances in science.

> help of technology and science will wish to set a limit to the number of human beings who can live on the earth ... We shall never be too numerous however many of us there are, if only we all together place our efforts and our intelligence at the service of mankind, a mankind which will be freed from the exploitation of man by man.[44]

In the following two sections we shall see that, despite the increased awareness by Western Marxists of world wide ecological degradation, population pressures, and the increasingly rapid extinction of species, the optimistic and anthropocentric belief in humanity's ability to master nature has remained unchallenged, indeed, has been heralded as the cornerstone of the Marxist solution to environmental degradation.

The recent efforts to develop a Marxist solution to the environmental crisis have been divided into two streams in accordance with the convenient distinction between "humanist" and "orthodox" Marxism (which corresponds generally to the work of the "young" and "mature" Marx respectively). The humanist eco-Marxists have sought to develop a more ecologically sensitive Marxist response to the environmental crisis that seeks to harmonize relations between the human and nonhuman realms; orthodox eco-Marxists, on the other hand, make no apologies for being anthropocentric and are critical of humanist eco-Marxists for being idealist, voluntarist, and decidedly "un-Marxist." From an ecocentric perspective, however, it will be shown that both streams of eco-Marxism uncritically accept Marx's view of history and his notion of humanity as homo faber and thereby perpetuate an instrumentalist and anthropocentric orientation toward the nonhuman world.

Orthodox Eco-Marxism

Orthodox eco-Marxists have strayed very little from the basic position of the "mature" Marx set out in the preceding section.[45] That is, environmental problems, like social problems, are traced directly to the exploitative dynamics of capitalism. The solution to these problems is seen to require the revolutionary transformation of

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44. "Primera Conferencia de Solidaridad de los Pueblos de America Latina," in America Latina: Demographia, Poblacion indigena y Salud, vol 2, (Havana: n.p., 1968), pp. 15f. Quoted by Enzensberger, "A Critique of Political Ecology," p. 14.

45. See Tolman, "Karl Marx, Alienation, and the Mastery of Nature"; Parsons, Marx and Engels on Ecology; and Beresford, "Doomsayers and Eco-nuts."

the relations of production combined with the development of a better theoretical understanding of nature and further advances in technology and so that a complete social mastery of nature can be attained for the benefit of all rather than the privileged capitalist class. This orthodox eco-Marxist interpretation thus retains Marx's view of history as a progressive dialectical struggle from the primitive to the advanced, resulting in the increasing domestication of the nonhuman world through the activity of labour and its extension, technology. In view of this, as Tolman points out,

> ... it should be clear why Marxists should continue to support the development of science and technology, and why they should assert the ultimate unity of science, technology, the mastery of nature, and humanism. Taking human history as a dialectical whole, these can all be seen as essential components of human nature itself. If understood in this dialectical sense, the Marxist gladly accepts the charge of "homocentrism."[46]

It clearly follows from such a view that the setting aside of areas of wilderness for the protection of endangered species and the preservation of biotic diversity will be seen as an unnecessary constraint on human self-realization, unless it can be shown to be of some instrumental value to humans, by providing, say, a place of recreation or acting as a store of potential raw materials for humanity's future productive labour. According to orthodox eco-Marxists, it simply makes no sense to say that the nonhuman world ought to be valued and protected for its own sake. For example, Howard Parsons, in his exhaustive review (and endorsement) of Marx and Engels' position on nature and technology, has trouble in grasping what the case against anthropocentrism is all about: "It is hard to know," he confesses, "what could be meant by nature 'in itself,' either in a Kantian sense or in the sense of a discrete reality entirely independent of our cognition and action?"[47] On the basis of this epistemological point - that nature cannot exist independently from our values and actions - Parsons concludes that humans cannot value the nonhuman world for its own sake.

Yet Parsons' answer to the critique of anthropocentrism misses entirely the normative point of the ecocentric critique. First, he commits what Fox refers to as

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46. Tolman, "Karl Marx, Alienation, and the Mastery of Nature," p. 72.

47. Parsons, Marx and Engels on Ecology, p. 44.

"the anthropocentric fallacy" in that he conflates the weak, trivial, and tautological sense of the term anthropocentric (i.e., that all our views are, necesssarily, human views) with the strong, substantive, informative sense of the term anthropocentric (the unwarranted, differential treatment of other beings on the basis that they do not belong to our own species). Second, and in any event, the ecocentric argument is not that we should value the nonhuman world because it exists completely independently from human values and actions. Ecocentric theorists would be the first to agree that we are intimately connected with the nonhuman world and vice versa. However, despite these interconnections, the model of internal relations that informs ecocentrism also recognizes the relative autonomy of all entities. On the basis of this recognition, ecocentric theorists are concerned to cultivate a prima facie orientation of nonfavouritism that allows both human and nonhuman entities to unfold in their own ways. And it is precisely because we are part of an interconnected, larger whole that ecocentric theorists argue that we should exercise our own freedom with care and compassion.

However, it is clear from Parsons' discussion that even if he properly grasped the ecocentric argument he would still reject the normative and practical claims it makes upon us. For example, Parsons rejects as "unrealistic" the radical ecological argument that we should simplify human needs, reduce human population and consumption, respect nature, and lead a more agrarian lifestyle. (All but the last of these points more or less reflect the kinds of changes defended by many ecocentric theorists; I argue in Chapter 7, however, that it is neither necessary nor desirable that everyone live in decentralized, rural settlements and there is a strong case for urban settlements in an ecocentric society.) According to Parsons, human survival and well-being depend on a "knowledge and control of nature's substances and processes."[48] The kind of knowledge Parsons and other orthodox eco-Marxists have in mind, however, is not the kind that sees nature as a pattern or set of interrelationships to respect and follow or a design from which to draw guidance and inspiration. Rather,

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48. Ibid., p. 45.

it is knowledge that will enable humans to overcome and redirect any resistance to their struggle for total mastery of nature. As Tolman explains,

> Marxism rejects this [ecocentric] unrealism, and in its view of the man-nature relation, is inclined to emphasize man rather than the plants and the animals. If the assumption of the criticism is that Marxism has this emphasis, the assumption is correct. And like many modern humanisms, Marxism has sometimes overemphasized man's place in nature."[49]

Clearly, orthodox eco-Marxists regard ecocentrism as putting an unnecessary restraint on human development, which they regard as dependent upon an expanding science and technology that will increase our ability to control and manipulate the "secrets of nature." However, in an effort to downplay the "domination of nature" theme in Marx's writings, Parson's reminds his ecological critics that the early Marx discussed the aesthetic needs of humans in relation to plants and animals (e.g., in The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844) and that although he may not have been as explicit on this score in his later writings on political economy he nonetheless "had those needs and others in mind when he recurrently called for the 'all-round development' of all persons as the goal of history and class struggle."[50] Yet this supposed counterweight to the mature Marx's undue emphasis on technological advancement and economic values is revealing, for the concern here is again restricted to the aesthetic needs of humans, not the needs or interests of nonhumans. This, of course, is entirely consistent with Marx's exclusive preoccupation with human affairs. Marx showed no interest in natural history and he did not address the cause of nonhuman suffering. Indeed, Parsons defends Marx's lack of interest in the emerging "humane societies" for the prevention of cruelty to animals in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, arguing that the concern for the welfare of nonhuman animals was "a displacement of human concern" that was restricted by the privileged class position of its advocates.[51] In any event, Parsons

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49. Ibid.

50. Ibid., p. 45.

51. Ibid.

suggests that in the long run nonhuman animals, like human animals, might also be liberated by technology:

> Presumably when animals are displaced entirely by machines as instruments of production, and when food is synthesized chemically, animals will enjoy a freedom not enjoyed since their domestication for food and labour in Neolithic times, and man's attitude toward them will likewise change with man's new freedom.[52]

However, far from being displaced by machines, many domestic animals (most notably cattle and hens) have been effectively turned into machines as a result of the application of "advanced" production techniques in agriculture. Moreover, ecological reality suggests that unless human population growth and the loss of genetic diversity and wild habitat is drastically curbed, there will be a very narrow range of nonhuman animals left to enjoy the distant "freedom" that Parsons believes will be wrought by advanced technology!

As we have seen, to the extent that environmental problems were acknowledged by Marx and Engels, they were attributed to the capitalist relations of production, not the forces of production. Orthodox eco-Marxists have fully endorsed this analysis of the problem: the capitalist classes, while initially facilitating the development of the productive forces, are ultimately seen as acting as a fetter to their full development by standing in the way of a full social appropriation of the power of nature and the control of any unwanted side-effects. According to Parsons:

> An economic system [such as the capitalist one] that breaches the laws of nature by which wealth is produced will bring on inevitable reactions: impairment of nature's "metabolism" of ecological cycles, depletion of nature's resources, impoverishment of human society, and a relapse of nature into the slumber of undevelopment.[53]

The Marxist explanation for ecological degradation lies in the fact that capital works only for the benefit of the owners and controllers of capital rather than for the benefit of the complete society of producers (it is assumed that the complete society of producers would act as a collective and would therefore be concerned to protect public environmental goods such as air, water, and soil). It is thus the

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52. Ibid., p. 45.

53. Ibid., p. 16.

dynamic of private capital accumulation that has given rise to resource depletion, pollution, untrammelled urbanization, and the occupational and residential hazards suffered by workers and their families.[54] In this respect, Marx frequently drew analogies between the exploitation of human labour and the exploitation of the soil. Yet as John Clark observes, although Parsons tries to establish Marx's ecological credentials by arguing that Marx recognized an "essential incompatibility" between capitalism and "the system of nature," Parsons in fact misses Marx's anti-ecological point:

> Marx's point is not that this expansionism is in conflict with nature, but rather that capital's quest for surplus value contradicts and limits this development in some ways, to the detriment of humanity. In contrast, an ecological critique would question this very expansionism as being in contradiction with "the system of nature" [my emphasis].[55]

Orthodox eco-Marxists simply seek to replace the private and socially inequitable mastery of nature under capitalism with the public and socially equitable mastery of nature under communism. Ecological degradation under capitalism is seen by orthodox eco-Marxists as a measure of its inefficiency, of its failure to utilize resources wisely. As such, orthodox eco-Marxists are predominantly Resource Conservationists; they are at home with Gifford Pinchot (with his "wise-use" of natural resources argument), but are fundamentally at odds with John Muir's vision of large tracts of wilderness being protected in their "state of natural grace."[56] (As I noted above, to the extent that orthodox eco-Marxists would be prepared to defend Preservationism, it would be on purely human-centred, instrumental grounds.) Of course, Marx and Engels were also early pioneers of what I have called the Human Welfare Ecology stream of environmentalism - indeed, as I noted in Chapter 2, Engels' classic critique of the working and living conditions of the Victorian working

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54. Ibid., pp. 18-19.

55. Clark, "Marx's Inorganic Body," p. 245.

56. For a critical juxtaposition of the respective concerns and philosophies of Marx and Muir, see Robyn Eckersley, "The Road to Ecotopia?: Socialism Versus Environmentalism," Island Magazine, Spring 1987, pp. 18-25 (reprinted in The Ecologist 18 [1988]: 142-47; The Trumpeter 5 [1988]: 60-64; and Andrew Sant and Michael Denholm, eds., First Rights: A Decade of Island Magazine [Elwood, Victoria: Greenhouse Publications, 1989], pp. 50-60).

class is a major milestone in the development of this stream of environmentalism.[57] However, while their critique challenged capitalism and exposed the misery of the working class, it did not challenge the hegemony of instrumental reason. As Alfred Schmidt concludes from his reading of Marx's later politico-economic writings:

> [Marx] ... was not solely concerned to secure a quantitative increase in the existing forms of mastery over nature. On the contrary, Marx wanted to achieve something qualitatively new: mastery by the whole of society of society's mastery over nature. This mastery would still depend on the functions of instrumental reason. But since it would "finalize" these functions, and subject them to truly human aims, the mastery of society would undertake its own correction; society's mastery over nature would thereby be freed from the curse of being simultaneously a mastery over men, and of thus perpetuating the reign of blind natural history.[58]

From an ecocentric perspective, the "true freedom" promised by scientific socialism is ultimately illusory. As Bookchin puts it, "at its best, Marx's work is an inherent self-deception that inadvertently absorbs the most questionable tenets of Enlightenment thought into its very sensibility."[59] It legitimates not only the conquest of nature but also new forms of bureaucratic domination and a highly rationalized capitalism. The result is that both people and nature are cast as mere instruments of production as we aspire toward a post-scarcity utopia. (This ecological critique of instrumental reason is discussed in detail in the following chapter.)

Moreover, ecofeminists have drawn attention to the "masculine" character of the mastery sought by the mature Marx, who rejected as regressive the idolization of nature as a "nurturing mother." According to Marx, modern "man" must sever his umbilical cord with nature and become a self-determining being in order to achieve his "manhood." As John Clark has observed,

> Marx's Promethean and Oedipal "man" is a being who is not at home in nature, who does not see the Earth as the "household" of ecology. He is an indominable spirit who must subjugate nature in his quest for self-realization...
> For such a being, the forces of nature, whether in the form of his own unmastered internal nature or the menacing powers of external nature, must be subdued.[60]

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57. Friedrich Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England, trans. and ed. W. O. Henderson and W. H. Chaloner, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971).

58. Schmidt, The Concept of Nature in Marx, pp. 12-13.

59. Bookchin, "Marxism as Bourgeois Sociology," p. 195.

Finally, as a result of the emphasis given to the relations of production, orthodox eco-Marxists continue to place faith in the working class as the agents of revolutionary change, both social and environmental. According to Parsons, the proletariat still remain the class best situated for "assuming ultimate power and responsibility over the whole transformed system" - including control of the unwanted side-effects of the manipulation of nature.[61] Post-Marxist Green theorists, on the other hand, have challenged what they call the "productivist ideology" and inherent conservatism of the Western labour movement and pointed instead to the radical potential of new social movements, particularly those concerned with ecology, feminism, and community control.[62]

To conclude this section, then, the eco-Marxist critique of capitalism still has relevance today in terms of highlighting the ways in which capitalism can exploit labourer and land alike, particularly in third world countries where ecological considerations are displaced almost entirely in the drive to develop massive power schemes and large scale export industries (often merely to service the large debts owed to first world countries).[63] From an ecocentric perspective, however, the eco-Marxist critique simply does not go far enough: it is fundamentally limited by its anthropocentrism, its focus on the relations of production at the expense of the forces of production, and its uncritical acceptance of industrial technology and instrumental reason.

Not surprisingly, the above shortcomings of orthodox Marxism have attracted the critical attention of a number of ecologically concerned Western Marxists of a "humanist" persuasion who are critical of "scientific socialism" yet still

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60. Clark, "Marx's Inorganic Body," p. 26.

61. Parsons, Marx and Engels on Ecology, p. 14.

62. See, for example, Bookchin, Toward an Ecological Society; Bahro, Socialism and Survival; John Clark, The Anarchist Moment: Reflections on Culture, Nature and Power (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1984); and Carl Boggs, Social Movements and Political Power: Emerging Forms of Radicalism (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

63. See Michael Redclift, Development and the Environmental Crisis: Red or Green Alternatives? (London: Methuen, 1984) and Redclift, Sustainable Development.

attracted to Marxism as a philosophy and form of critique. I will now turn to this humanist eco-Marxist alternative.

Humanist Eco-Marxism

Unlike orthodox eco-Marxists, humanist eco-Marxists argue that it is necessary to reassess Marx's technological optimism and 19th century belief in material progress. According to Andre Gorz, the collective appropriation by the proletariat of the capitalist forces of production would not solve the ecological crisis: it would simply mean that the proletariat would take over the machinery of domination.[64] He argues that the development of the productive forces, hitherto welcomed by most Marxists, must be re-examined on the grounds that they now threaten "the very existence of society."[65] Similarly, Enzensberger has argued that the ecological crisis can be dealt with in Marxist terms if we remember that capitalism is not just a property relation but also a mode of production in which the forces and relations of production are inextricably linked; this capitalist mode of production is something that the socialist countries, which he considers to be "still in transition," have yet to abandon.[66]

In asking how we might resolve the ecological contradictions of industrialism and what kind of human being will inhabit the society that lies beyond the realm of domination, humanist eco-Marxists have sought inspiration from the philosophical writings of the young Marx.[67] Indeed, John Ely has shown that certain aspects of the young Marx's utopianism concerning the reconciliation of humanity

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64. Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class, p. 100.

65. Ibid.

66. Enzensberger, "A Critique of Political Ecology," p. 21. Enzensberger's call has also been endorsed by Adrienne Farago, "Environmentalism and the Left," p. 13

67. Enzensberger, "A Critique of Political Ecology," p. 31; Lee, "On the Marxian View"; Herbert Marcuse, One Dimensional Man (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964); Marcuse, Counter Revolution and Revolt (London: Allen Lane, 1972) - see in particular the chapter "Nature and Revolution," pp. 60-128, especially pp. 63-64; K. D. Shifferd, "Karl Marx and the Environment," The Journal of Environmental Education 3 (1972): 39-42; Gorz, Ecology as Politics; Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class; Thompson, "The Death of a Contradiction," p. 20; and Lowy, "The Romantic and the Marxist Critique of Modern Civilization."

and nonhuman nature have been taken up directly in the West German Greens' first economic programme, although the usage of these concepts by the Greens is selective rather than systematic.[68]

The most ecologically sensitive case for a return to the ideas of the young Marx is that provided by Donald Lee in his essay entitled "On the Marxian View of the Relationship between Man and Nature."[69] However, I intend to argue in this section that while Lee's particular vision of humanist eco-Marxism is, for the most part, no longer vulnerable to the criticisms that I have levelled against orthodox eco-Marxism, it is also no longer Marxist. That is, Lee has developed a particular version of humanist eco-Marxism that downplays, and in some cases ignores, key distinctions and themes in the writings of the young Marx. I intend to show that these particular distinctions and themes are, when closely examined, such as to make humanist Marxism irredeemable from an ecocentric perspective. The most important of these is Marx's distinction between "freedom" and "necessity." I argue that this key distinction serves to make the domination of the nonhuman world a requirement of human self-realization. By drawing on examples of other versions of humanist eco-Marxism that actively endorse this particular distinction, I conclude that humanist eco-Marxism - while a definite improvement on orthodox eco-Marxism - is fundamentally incompatible with an ecocentric perspective.

The basic goal of Lee's approach is to overcome alienation in a very broad sense, with the ecology crisis taken as evidence of our alienation from nature and as one more obstacle in the path to human emancipation. According to Lee's reading of Marx's early writings on alienation, there is no human/nature (or Subject/Object) dichotomy in Marx's thinking, as is often claimed. Rather, Lee argues that Marx was concerned to overcome alienation between humans and themselves and their work

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68. Ely, "Marxism and Green Politics in West Germany," p. 26.

69. It should be noted that Lee's case had already been advanced as early as 1972 by K. D. Shifferd in "Karl Marx and the Environment" and by Herbert Marcuse in his essay "Nature and Revolution" in Counterrevolution and Revolt (1972). However, Lee's argument in "On the Marxian View" is a more suitable focus for present purposes since it is both more recent and more developed.

and between humans and external nature. Under capitalism, both worker and nonhuman nature are considered by the capitalist class as instruments to be exploited for private profit. According to Lee, "capitalism was a necessary stage in man's development of the mastery of nature: but a further development is now necessary, namely, the overcoming of the dichotomy between man as subject over and against nature as object."[70]

In Lee's view, Marx's ideas were not anthropocentric because he conceived of nature as humanity's inorganic body: "The recognition of nature as our body will constitute the overcoming of the alienation of ourselves from nature, manifested in subject-object dualism."[71] On the basis of this insight, Lee has sought to outline an ecologically benign form of socialist stewardship of nature that will emancipate humans and nonhumans alike from the tyranny of capitalism so that humankind can become the caretakers of its own "body." This socialist notion of nonhuman nature as our inorganic body, toward which we have a responsibility of care, is juxtaposed to the capitalist conception of nature as an alien "other" to be exploited for private profit. According to Lee, an ecological ethic must become part of the Marxist programme of liberation; socialism must be developed to what Lee sees as its logical end, that is, beyond homocentrism (i.e., anthropocentrism).[72]

From a political viewpoint, Lee argues that the present dichotomy between humanity and nature may only be overcome through the overthrow of the wasteful capitalist system (read mode of production) and its replacement by "a rational, humane, environmentally unalienated social order."[73] The major characteristics of this new order would be socially useful production, the reduction of labour time, maximum creative leisure, wise use of resources, rational population control, and solidarity between all living things, not just humans. Lee's post-scarcity utopia is thus

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70. Lee, "On the Marxian View," p. 11.

71. Ibid., p. 8.

72. Ibid., p. 15.

73. Ibid., p. 11.

one in which everyone will be able to realize what Marx referred to as our "species being" - a situation of genuine freedom from need - whereby we can create according to the "laws of beauty" and become responsible stewards of the ecosystem. According to Lee, this form of socialist stewardship is based on a a sense of enlightened self-interest because:

> Man is the universal being who can understand what is good for each species intrinsically, and thus, just as socialist man transcends the selfish greed of the capitalist and acts for the good of all men (which is ultimately his own good) so must ecologically aware socialist man transcend the selfish greed of homocentrism and act for the good of the whole ecosystem (which ultimately is his own good).[74]

Lee's socialist post-scarcity utopia represents a considerable departure from the orthodox eco-Marxists' Promethean vision of "conquering" nature. That is, Lee's socialist society does not seek to dominate nonhuman nature as an alien "other" through the development of technology. Rather, it is to be a society of self-determining individuals who realize themselves through free, conscious activity and recognize nonhuman nature as but an extension of themselves, as part of their inorganic body.

However, what is not apparent in Lee's ecological interpretation of the ideas of the young Marx, and what is apparent in the writings of the young Marx and in other versions of humanist eco-Marxism, is a notion of human freedom that is irredeemably anthropocentric. This notion of human freedom takes its meaning from Marx's distinction between freedom and necessity.

It will be recalled that the young Marx maintained that humans realize their "essence" through unalienated labour and that the distinctive characteristic of humans was that "they produce universally, i.e., produce even when free from physical need and only truly produce in freedom thereof."[75] This same distinction also runs through the writings of the mature Marx. For example, in Capital Marx wrote:

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74. Ibid., p. 16.

75. Marx, The Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, p. 113.

> The realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; thus in the nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production.[76]

As Andre Gorz points out in commenting upon this passage,

> ... contrary to a widespread misconception, Marx does not equate the reign of liberty with self-management of material production by the associated producers ... [Rather] at the level of material production, freedom consists merely of being able to work with as much dignity and efficiency as possible for as brief a time as possible. This is the direction in which self management should point. As for the realm of freedom, it will flourish through the reduction of working time and of the effort involved in producing what is necessary.[77]

According to Marcuse and Gorz (both of whom develop this freedom/necessity theme), the more we have mastered necessity, the more we can become truly free and realize our individuality through creative leisure, through the sciences and the arts, through convivial activity, and the like. According to Marcuse (who also drew on Freud's theory of human instincts), freedom lies in Eros and play, not labour, for labour presupposes the suppression of instincts and the conquering of desire. In other words, the problem lies in the fact that social necessity demands that humans must always labour. Unlike Freud, however, Marcuse argued that in today's society scarcity (which gave rise to "basic repression") is not so much a brute fact as a consequence of a specific social organization that is sustained to secure the privileged position of powerful groups and individuals - a state of affairs that has led to "surplus repression."[78] Marcuse observed that, paradoxically, the very technological achievements of "repressive civilization" (which he considered to be dominated by

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76. Marx, Capital, vol. 3, p. 820.

77. Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class, pp. 96-97. Against Gorz's interpretation, Schmidt has noted passages from the Grundrisse (which represents an important bridge between the young and mature Marx) that suggest that Marx believed that a humanized realm of necessity can also become a sphere of human self-realization (The Concept of Nature in Marx, p. 143). This does not, however, detract from Marx's overriding concern to rationalize and reduce necessary labour. As Schmidt himself argues, "the problem of human freedom is reduced by Marx to the problem of free time" (p. 142). This was also a concern of the young Marx (see Booth, "Gone Fishing") and certainly represents the direction in which Gorz and Marcuse have developed Marx's ideas.

78. According to Marcuse, Freud had theorized that "behind the reality principle lies the fundamental fact of Ananke or scarcity (Lebensnot), which means that the struggle for existence takes place in a world too poor for the satisfaction of human needs without constant restraint, renunciation, delay." See Herbert Marcuse, Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), p. 35.

the "performance principle" - the prevailing historical form of the "reality principle") have created the preconditions for the gradual abolition of repression. That is, breaking down these social relations of domination would enable the forces of production to be pressed into the service of "genuine need" by liberating humans from toil, thereby creating a post-scarcity and hence "nonrepressive civilization." Like the young Marx (and contra the mature Marx), Marcuse believed that both labour and scarcity could be abolished in this way rather than simply diminished.

The problem with this humanist eco-Marxist project of overcoming human alienation is that "true" human freedom and embeddedness in nature are posited as inversely related.[79] That is, the kind of freedom pursued by humanist eco-Marxists necessarily requires the subjugation of external nature (through labour's extension, technology) so that humans may ultimately become fully sovereign and answerable only to themselves as opposed to being dependent on, and "held down" by, the limitations and inconveniences of nonhuman nature. Nonhuman nature remains, as Benton observes, "an external, threatening and constraining power ... to be overcome in the course of a long-drawn-out historical process of collective transformation."[80]

The ultimate purport, then, of Marx's notion of "the resurrection of nature" in The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts 1844 is not a nonanthropocentric socialist stewardship of "our inorganic body," as Lee would have us believe, but rather the further subjugation of the nonhuman world.[81] If Lee's humanist eco-Marxism is to remain recognizable as Marxism, then it must accept the anthropocentric implications of Marx's particular notion of freedom, which takes its meaning from the freedom/necessity distinction discussed above.

In any event, some ecocentric critics have argued that even Lee's apparently benign ecological interpretation of the ideas of the young Marx - an interpretation that focuses on the theme of alienation - nonetheless serves to legitimize (albeit

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79. Balbus, Marxism and Domination, p. 274.

80. Benton, "Humanism = Speciesism," p. 7.

81. Balbus, Marxism and Domination, p. 274.

unwittingly) the domination of the nonhuman world. According to Lee, the overcoming of our alienation from nature is understood as the outcome of a dialectical struggle (sometimes referred to as a "metabolic interaction") between Subject (the labourer) and Object (external nature, the material to be transformed). According to this view, for nature to be recognized as our "body," a familiar and extended part of us rather than something "other," there must be a mutual interpenetration of both spheres through the activity of labour resulting in the mutual transformation of both - thus arriving at the much heralded "humanization of nature" and "naturalization of humanity." Ecocentric critics have been quick to point out that this superficially attractive version of overcoming the human/nature dichotomy is yet another form of domination couched in the language of human self-realization.[d82] According to Val Routley, Marx's early view of nature as our body, our creation and our expression

> ... can usefully be seen as the product of Marx's well-known transposition of God's features and role in the Hegelian system of thought onto man ... Thus, Marx's theory represents an extreme form of the placing of man in the role previously attributed to God, a transposition so characteristic of Enlightenment thought.[83]

The upshot of humanist eco-Marxism (Lee's version included) is that the unity of humans with nature is achieved by making it our artifact, by totally domesticating it. We have thus returned full circle to the orthodox solution to the environmental crisis (albeit couched in different language), to that stage of human development where nature is totally mastered through the power of associated individuals. In Lee's own words, this "unity" would enable us to live "in consciousness that each of us is identical with each other and with nature, and exploitation of men and nature would cease."[84]

From an ecocentric perspective, however, harmonizing our relationship with the rest of nature does not mean obliterating what is "other" or not-human in nature.

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82. Routley, "On Karl Marx as an Environmental Hero," p. 239.

83. Ibid., pp. 239-40.

84. Lee, "On the Marxian View," p. 9.

Rather, it means identifying with it in a way that involves the recognition of the relative autonomy and unique modes of being of the myriad life-forms that make up the nonhuman world. This is because freedom or self-determination is recognized as a legitimate entitlement of both human and nonhuman life-forms. As we saw in Chapter 2, the goal of an ecocentric political theory is "emancipation writ large" - the maximisation of the freedom of all entities to unfold or develop in their own ways. Moreover, such freedom or self-determination is understood in relational terms (both socially and ecologically) insofar as the development of any relatively autonomous parts of a larger system (e.g., an ecosystem or the ecosphere) is inextricably tied to its relationship with the development of other relatively autonomous parts of that system as well as the development of the system itself (i.e., the whole). Ecocentric theorists argue that whereas the flourishing of human life and culture is quite compatible with a lifestyle based on low material and energy throughput, the flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a lifestyle. In order to meet this requirement we need to live and experience ourselves as part of, and more or less keep pace with, the basic cycles and processes of nature rather than seek to totally transcend the nonhuman world by removing all of its inconveniences and thereby obliterating its "otherness."

To be sure, Lee's reinterpretation of the "mastery" of nature to mean "rational harmony with nature," which is cognizant of the need for population control and of the need to respect the carrying capacity of the land, is more ecologically grounded than that of orthodox eco-Marxists, who would openly encourage the development of all manner of synthetic substitutes for "nature's bounty" so as to avoid remaining "tethered" to the cycles of nature. Yet this latter kind of outcome is logically entailed in the quest for freedom according to the young Marx. As we have seen, if true freedom is understood to be inversely related to our embeddedness in nature, then the realization of that freedom necessarily requires that we seek to increase our control over, and reduce our dependence on, ecological cycles. The upshot is that nature, although redefined as "our body," must be thoroughly tamed and made subservient to human ends.

Of course, the kind of "true human freedom" promised by humanist eco-Marxists is an attractive and familiar interpretation of "freedom," made all the more so in the light of our general bifurcation between work and leisure in modern society. Yet, from an ecocentric perspective, this eco-Marxist coupling of necessity/freedom and work/leisure is objectionable in two important respects. First, it is based on the anthropocentric Marxian "differential imperative" of homo faber. It will be recalled from our discussion in Chapter 2 that the "differential imperative" refers to the selection of characteristics that are special to humans vis-a-vis other species as the measure of both human virtue and human superiority over other species. According to Marx, to be fully human and truly free, humans must maximise what he believed made us different from the rest of nature, namely, our ability to self-consciously act upon and transform the external world and thereby augment our own powers.[85] Yet, like so many anthropocentric assumptions, Marx's putative human/nonhuman opposition is based on an erroneous understanding of ecological reality. As Benton puts it in an extended critique of this opposition:

> For his intellectual purposes, Marx exaggerates both the fixity and limitedness of scope in the activity of other animals, and the flexibility and universality of scope of human activity upon the environment.[86]

Second, the eco-Marxist distinction between freedom and necessity reifies non-essential activities as the means to true individual fulfilment while downgrading as lowly or "animal-like" many life-sustaining activities that can be potentially more fulfilling if approached and organized differently. (By life-sustaining activities, I am referring to those fundamental human activities necessary for survival and physical and psychological health such as growing and preparing food, constructing and maintaining shelter, nurturing and teaching the young, and caring for the infirm and the elderly.) The result is that culture and self-expression are made the complete antithesis of necessary material labour. This is because the general reduction of necessary labour time is seen to provide the foundation for the "true freedom" to be

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85. Benton, "Humanism = Speciesism," p. 8.

86. Ibid., p. 9.

experienced by all humans, a freedom to be "purchased" via ongoing technological developments designed to "relieve" humans from concerning themselves with those burdensome tasks that have limited the development of present and prior generations of humans and which are seen to remain forever the lot of the rest of the animal world.[87] Marx's distinction between freedom and necessity thus creates a dualism not only between humans and nonhuman nature but also within human nature between common, lowly animal functions, powers, and needs and sui generis, higher human functions, powers, and needs.[88] (As I show in Chapter 8, Simone de Beauvoir has drawn attention to a similar kind of contrasting valuation between nature and culture and between the self-limiting work of women and the self-transcending work of men. The former is treated as private, mundane, and concerned with the regeneration and repetition of life while the latter is regarded as public, worthy, and concerned with transcending life by reshaping the future through technology and symbols.)

The ecocentric objection to the post-scarcity utopia of humanist eco-Marxism is that it would cultivate a type of human who, as Val Routley has observed, through science and technology, is thoroughly insulated from, and in control of, the cycles of nature and the myriad of other nonhuman life-forms. Indeed, it is hard to see how the overcoming of human alienation from nature is to be achieved in such a utopia when humans are to be so thoroughly insulated and removed from their biological roots. In effect, the price of overcoming alienation in the workplace is alienation from nonhuman nature. Moreover, as Bookchin has argued, according to the Marxist view of freedom, class society and authoritarian social relations will remain unavoidable for so long as the mode of production fails to provide a sufficient material abundance for everybody to enjoy the realm of "true

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87. As I pointed out in footnote 77, there are passages in the Grundrisse that run contrary to this interpretation in that they suggest that human freedom or self-realization can be attained through democratic self-management in the workplace. This is a much more defensible interpretation from an ecocentric perspective. However, I argue that this interpretation does not hold up against Marx's freedom/necessity distinction, which appears in both his early and mature writings.

88. Benton, "Humanism = Speciesism," p. 12.

freedom." Until that time, the "realm of necessity" will become "a realm of command and obedience, of ruler and ruled." That is, domination of people and nature under a rationalized capitalism remains the precondition for the achievement of a distant and continually postponed socialist freedom.[89]

It is clear that Marcuse's version of humanist eco-Marxism is more firmly grounded in the philosophical ideas of the young Marx than Lee's version. Indeed, it is noteworthy that Tolman has rejected Lee's selective reading of Marx's early writings for being decidedly un-Marxist. According to Tolman, Lee's basic argument that we ought to see ourselves as stewards of the environment, which is to be seen as part of our "inorganic" body, is a serious distortion of Marx's true position, since Marx ultimately rejected the ideas drawn upon by Lee as abstract and idealist.[90] We have seen in section one that the mature Marx, as Schmidt has pointed out, had come to the view that the antagonistic struggle between humanity and nature would never be completely resolved, that is, nature would never be fully "resurrected" since labour could never be totally abolished and, accordingly, there would always be some parts of nature that remained untransformed and alien. For his part, Tolman makes no apologies in declaring the incompatibility between Marxism and ecocentrism. On this score, Tolman seems to have a clearer perception than Lee of the long term technological and ecological implications of Marxism.

From an ecocentric perspective, then, the Marxian dichotomy between freedom and necessity must be transcended if we are to allow the mutual unfolding of both human and nonhuman life. In particular, the view (strongly endorsed by Gorz in particular) that even unalienated, self-managed material labour is a "lower" form of freedom than unnecessary labour and/or leisure activity must be rejected. Rather, the emphasis must turn to exploring the many ways in which basic needs may be met and necessary and life-sustaining work performed in a manner that is personally,

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89. Bookchin, "Marxism as Bourgeois Sociology," pp. 204-6. See also Routley, "On Karl Marx as an Environmental Hero," p. 241.

90. Tolman, "Karl Marx, Alienation, and the Mastery of Nature," p. 72.

aesthetically, and intellectually satisfying and not environmentally damaging.[91] Individuality, self-expression, and rounded human development will then be able to be realised through socially useful work as well as through other kinds of activity. (As I show in my discussion of ecoanarchism is Chapter 7, one kind of setting in which rounded human development is possible is a self-managed, co-operative community.) Moreover, contrary to Gorz's presumption, the enjoyment of "true freedom" as leisure need not be dependent on high technology or a high energy and material throughput. As Marshall Sahlins has argued in Stone Age Economics, the enjoyment of affluence (i.e., interpreted here as ample creative leisure rather than an abundance of material goods) by the members of a particular society is not necessarily dependent on that society "mastering necessity" by conquering nature through advanced technology and a high energy throughput.[92] Quite the contrary, his book is an important illustration of the maxim "want not, lack not" and a challenge to what he calls modern culture's "shrine to the Unattainable: Infinite Needs."[93] From an ecocentric perspective, such creative leisure is best procured through the critical revision and simplification of human needs and the development of tools and goods appropriate to those revised needs rather than through the systematic replacement of human labour by energy intensive machines.

Conclusion

The above discussion is intended to demonstrate that an ecocentric perspective cannot be wrested out of Marxism, whether orthodox or humanist, without seriously distorting Marx's own philosophical concepts. As John Clark has put it, "to develop the submerged ecological dimension of Marx would mean the negation of key aspects of his philosophy of history, his theory of human nature, and

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91. See also Benton, "Humanism = Speciesism," p. 14, and Routley, "On Karl Marx as an Environmental Hero," p. 242.

92. Marshal Sahlins, Stone Age Economics (London: Tavistock, 1974) - see especially chapter one "The Original Affluent Society," pp. 1-39.

93. Ibid., p. 39.

his view of social transformation."[94] This explains why nonanthropocentric Greens theorists have chosen not to develop their ideas within a Marxist matrix and instead have sought guidance from other traditions of political thought such as utopian or "ethical" socialism, communal anarchism, and feminism. Far from providing a theoretical touchstone, then, many radical Green theorists have argued that the time has come for ecologically oriented political theorists to do to the ideas of Marx what he did to the ideas of the bourgeois thinkers he contested, namely, explain their origins in order to reveal their historical limits.[95] In this respect, Hwa Yol Jung has provided three succinct reasons why ecologically oriented theorists should abandon the ideas of Marx:

> First, he was too Hegelian to realize that the gain of "History" (or Humanity) is the loss of "Nature"; second, he was influenced by the English classical labour theory of value which undergirds his conception of man as homo faber; and third, he was a victim of the untamed optimism of the Enlightenment for Humanity's future progress.[96]

To be sure, Marx's conception of freedom was more comprehensive than the liberal concept of freedom that he called to account. As Booth has neatly put it, whereas "liberalism had grasped one form of unfreedom, coercion, or the arbitrary rule of one will over another, which was the dominant form in precapitalist societies," Marxism recognized another form, namely, the silent and "objective compulsion" of the economic laws of capitalism.[97] As ecocentric theorists have shown, however, neither liberalism nor Marxism have acknowledged the unfreedom of the nonhuman world under industrialism.[98] To acknowledge the particular kinds of unfreedom exposed by Marx, as ecocentric theorists do (given their general concern for "emancipation writ large"), does not also require an acceptance of Marx's notion of freedom. Quite the

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94. Clark, "Marx's Inorganic Body," p. 250.

95. Balbus, "A Neo-Hegelian Perspective," see p. 110.

96. Jung, "Marxism, Ecology, and Technology," p. 170.

97. Booth, "Gone Fishing," pp. 220-21.

98. As I pointed out in Chapter 1, Mill and Bentham constitute two important exceptions within the liberal tradition insofar as they were concerned to alleviate the suffering of animals.

contrary. I have tried to show that Marx's notion of freedom as mastery achieved through struggle, as the subjugation of the external world through labour and its extension - technology, as the conquering of mysterious or hostile forces and the overcoming of all constraints, can only be achieved at the expense of the nonhuman world.

In this chapter, my discussion has generally been confined to those strands of eco-Marxism that have sought inspiration from Marx's own texts. However, there is one more relatively distinct sub-set of humanist Marxist thought, namely, the Critical Theory of the Frankfurt school, that warrants the special attention of ecocentric theorists on account of its innovative critique of instrumental reason - a subject largely left unexplored by the theorists discussed in this chapter (with the exception, of course, of Marcuse, who is himself a Critical Theorist). In the following chapter I shall critically explore the insights of the Frankfurt School on the relationship between the domination of people and the domination of nonhuman nature in order to determine whether this particular school of Neo-Marxism can provide new conceptual tools that are relevant to the ecocentric emancipatory project.

Chapter 5

The Failed Promise of Critical Theory

Introduction

In the previous chapter I argued that the orthodox and humanist strands of eco-Marxism have not been able to offer an emancipatory ecopolitical theory of sufficient scope to satisfy the concerns of ecocentric theorists (although Marx's analysis of capitalism goes some way toward explaining the economic dynamics that lie behind ecological degradation). Although forming part of the humanist Marxist heritage, the Critical Theory developed by the members of the Frankfurt Institute of Social Research ("the Frankfurt School") warrants separate treatment because it has revised this heritage in ways that do directly address the wider emancipatory concerns of ecocentric theorists.[1] In particular, Critical Theorists have laid down a direct challenge to the Marxist idea that "true freedom" lies beyond socially necessary labour. They have argued that the more we try to "master necessity" through the increasing application of instrumental reason to all spheres of life, the less free we will become. In this chapter, I evaluate the special contribution of certain key members of the first and second generation of Critical Theorists in order to determine the extent to which their innovative critique of instrumental reason is compatible with an ecocentric perspective. I show that Critical Theory had the potential to develop in a thoroughgoing ecocentric direction but that this potential was not realized. Indeed, I show that Critical Theory, after a promising start, ultimately returned to the anthropocentric fold of Marxism.

Critical Theory represents an important break with orthodox Marxism - a break that was undertaken in order to understand, among other things, why Marx's

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1. The Frankfurt School was founded in 1923 as an independently endowed institute for the exploration of social phenomenon. For an historical overview, see Martin Jay, The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research 1923-1970 (Boston: Little Brown, 1973).

original emancipatory promise had not been fulfilled. Like most other strands of Western Marxism, Critical Theory turned away from the scientism and historical materialism of orthodox Marxism that dominated the Second International.[2] In the case of the Frankfurt School, however, it was not through a critique of political economy but rather through a critique of culture, scientism, and instrumental reason that Marxist debates were entered. One of the enduring contributions of the first generation of Frankfurt School theorists (notably, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse) was to show that there are different levels and dimensions of domination and exploitation beyond the economic sphere and that the former are no less important than the latter. The most radical thematic innovation concerning this broader understanding of domination came from the early Frankfurt School theorists' critical examination of the relationship between humanity and nature. This resulted in a fundamental challenge to the orthodox Marxian view concerning the progressive march of history, which had emphasized the liberatory potential of the increasing mastery of nature through the development of the productive forces. Far from welcoming these developments as marking the "ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom" (to borrow Engels' phrase), Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse saw them in essentially negative terms as giving rise to the domination of both "outer" and "inner" nature.[3] (For this reason, the early Frankfurt School theorists regarded the rationalization process set in train by the Enlightenment as a "negative dialectics.") This was reflected, on the one hand, in the apprehension and conversion of nonhuman nature into resources for production or objects of scientific inquiry (including animal experimentation) and, on the other hand, in the repression of humanity's joyful and spontaneous instincts brought about through a repressive social division of labour and a repressive division of the human psyche.

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2. The First and Second Internationals refer to the successive international federations of socialist parties and organizations, the first of which was the international "Working Men's Association" formed in 1864 in London. The Second International was formed in Paris in 1889, but disintegrated with the outbreak of World War I in 1914 owing to divided nationalist and socialist loyalties.

3. Friedrich Engels, "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific" in The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), p. 638.

Hence their quest for a human "reconciliation" with nature. Instrumental or "purposive" rationality - that branch of human reason that is concerned with determining the most effective or efficient means of realizing pregiven goals and which accordingly apprehends only the instrumental (i.e., use) value of phenomena - should not, they argued, become the exemplar of rationality for society. Human happiness would not come about simply by improving our techniques of social administration, by treating society and nature as subject to blind, immutable laws that could be manipulated by a technocratic elite.

The early Frankfurt School's critique of instrumental rationality (or "technocratic rationality") has been carried forward and extensively revised by Jurgen Habermas, who has sought to show, among other things, how political decision making has been increasingly reduced to pragmatic instrumentality, which serves the capitalist and bureaucratic system while "colonizing the life-world."[4] According to Habermas, the "scientization of politics" has resulted in the lay public ceding ever greater areas of system-steering decision making to technocratic elites.

All of these themes have a significant bearing on the Green critique of industrialism, modern technology and bureaucracy, and the Green commitment to grassroots democracy. Yet Critical Theory has not had a major direct influence in shaping the theory and practice of the Green movement in the 1980s, whether in West Germany or elsewhere.[5] I have noted in Chapter 1, however, that the ideas of Marcuse and Habermas did have a significant impact on the thinking of the New Left in the 1960s and early 1970s and that the general "participatory" theme that

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4. By "life-world" Habermas means "the taken-for-granted universe of daily social activity." Anthony Giddens, "Reason Without Revolution? Habermas's Theories des kommunikativen Handelns," in Richard J. Bernstein, ed., Habermas and Modernity (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985), pp. 95-123 at p. 101.

5. See, for example, Werner Hulsberg, The German Greens: A Social And Political Profile (London: Verso, 1988), pp. 8-9; John Ely, "Marxism and Green Politics in West Germany," Thesis Eleven 13 (1986): 22-38 at p. 27 and footnote 11. It should be noted, however, that the themes of the early Frankfurt School theorists (Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse) have had an important influence on the emancipatory ecopolitical writings of Murray Bookchin, who has been an influential figure in the Green movement in North America. As I show in Chapter 7, however, Bookchin was to invert the early Frankfurt School's thesis concerning the domination of human and nonhuman nature.

characterized that era has remained an enduring thread in the emancipatory stream of ecopolitical thought. Yet this legacy is largely an indirect one. Of course, there are some emancipatory ecopolitical theorists who have drawn upon Habermas's social and political theory in articulating and explaining some aspects of the Green critique of advanced industrial society.[6] However, this can be contrasted with the much greater general influence of post-Marxist Green theorists such as Murray Bookchin, Theodore Roszak, and Rudolf Bahro and non-Marxist Green theories such as bioregionalism, deep/transpersonal ecology, and ecofeminism - a comparison that further underscores the distance Green theory has had to travel away from the basic corpus of Marxism and neo-Marxism in order to find a comfortable theoretical "home."

It is important to understand why Critical Theory has not had a greater direct impact on Green political theory and practice given that two of its central problematics - the triumph of instrumental reason and the domination of nature - might have served as a useful theoretical starting point for the Green critique of industrial society. This possibility was indeed a likely one when it is remembered that both the Frankfurt School and Green theorists acknowledge the dwindling revolutionary potential of the working class (owing to its integration into the capitalist order); that both are critical of totalitarianism, technocratic rationality, mass culture, and consumerism; and that both have strong German connections. Why did these two currents of thought not come together?

There are many possible explanations as to why Critical Theory has not been more influential. One might note, for example, the early Frankfurt School's pessimistic outlook (particularly that of Adorno and Horkheimer), its ambivalence toward nature romanticism (acquired in part from its critical inquiry into Nazism), its rarefied language, its distance from the imperfect world of day-to-day political

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6. For example, William Leiss, The Domination of Nature (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974); Timothy W. Luke and Stephen K. White, "Critical Theory, the Informational Revolution, and an Ecological Path to Modernity," in Critical Theory and Public Life, ed. John Forester (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1985), pp. 22-53; and John Dryzek, Rational Ecology: Environment and Political Economy (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987).

struggles (Marcuse being an important exception here), and its increasing preoccupation with theory rather than praxis (despite its original project of uniting the two). Yet I intend to argue that the more fundamental explanation lies in the direction in which Critical Theory has developed since the 1960s, particularly in the hands of Jurgen Habermas who has, by and large, remained preoccupied with and allied to the fortunes of democratic socialism (represented by the Social Democratic Party in West Germany) rather than the fledgling Green movement and its parliamentary representatives.[7] Of course, the Green movement has not escaped Habermas's attention. However, he has tended to approach the movement more as an indicator of the motivational and legitimacy problems in advanced capitalist societies rather than as the historic bearer of emancipatory ideas (this is to be contrasted with Marcuse, who embraced the activities of new social movements).[8] Habermas has analysed the emergence of new social movements and "Green" concerns as a grassroots "resistance to tendencies to colonize the life-world."[9] With the exception of the women's movement (which Habermas does consider to be emancipatory), these new social movements (e.g., ecology, anti-nuclear) are seen as essentially defensive in

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7. In a recent collection of interviews published in 1986, Habermas declared: "I vote for the S.P.D., and have always done so. Naturally, I would like to see an alliance between the S.P.D. and the Greens, what is left of the labour movement and the new social movements. But this is not a natural alliance. How can unity be achieved among such heterogeneous groups - anti-productivist, old-productivist, new-middle class? Above all, what kind of political vision can be developed beyond the impasse of the welfare state?" See Peter Dews, ed., Habermas: Autonomy and Solidarity (London: Verso, 1986), p. 210.

8. Marcuse saw the ecology and feminist movements in particular as the most promising political movements and foreshadowed many of the insights of ecofeminism (discussed in Chapter 8). For example, in Counterrevolution and Revolt (London: Allen Lane, 1972), he argued for the elevation of the "female principle," describing the women's movement as a radical force that was undermining the sphere of aggressive needs, the performance principle, and the social institutions by which these are fostered (p. 75). See also Herbert Marcuse, "Protosocialism and Late Capitalism: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis Based on Bahro's Analysis," in Ulf Wolter, ed., Rudolf Bahro: Critical Responses, original trans. Michael Vale and Annemarie Feenberg with the assistance of Andree Feenberg; revised trans. Erica Sherover Marcuse (White Plains, New York: M. E. Sharp, 1980), pp. 25-48 at p. 43.

9. "New Social Movements," Telos 49 (1981): 33-37 at p. 35. This article is extracted from the final chapter of Jurgen Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, vol 2: Life-world and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), p. 393.

character.[10] While acknowledging the ecological and bureaucratic problems identified by these movements, Habermas regards their proposals to develop counterinstitutions and "liberated areas" from within the life-world as essentially unrealistic. What is required, he has argued, are "technical and economic solutions that must be planned globally and implemented by administrative means."[11] In defending the revolutionary potential of new social movements, Murray Bookchin has accused Habermas of intellectualizing new social movements "to a point where they are simply incoherent, indeed, atavistic."[12] According to Bookchin, Habermas has no sense of the potentiality of new social movements.

Yet Habermas's general aloofness from the Green movement (most notably, its radical ecocentric stream) goes much deeper than this. It may be traced to Habermas's theoretical break with the "negative dialectics" of the early Frankfurt School theorists and with their utopian goal of a "reconciliation with nature." Habermas has argued that such a utopian goal is neither necessary nor desirable for human emancipation. Instead, he has welcomed the rationalization process set in train by the Enlightenment as a positive rather than negative development. This chapter will therefore be concerned to locate this theoretical break and outline the broad contours of the subsequent development of Habermas's social and political theory in order to identify what I take to be the major theoretical stumbling blocks in Habermas's oeuvre - from an ecocentric perspective. (This is not intended to be an

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10. Habermas, "New Social Movements," p. 34.

11. Ibid., pp. 37 and 35. Habermas's preferred solution arises from his delineation of two forms of rationality - a systems rationality, which corresponds to purposive rationality, and a life-world rationality, which corresponds to communicative rationality (these distinctions are discussed in greater detail below). While he observes the distorting effects resulting from the colonization of the life-world by systems rationality, he insists that only the latter can deal with the pathologies of advanced capitalism. Yet, as Giddens observes, if these pathologies are the result of the triumph of purposive rationality, how can the life-world be defended against the encroachments of bureaucratic and economic steering mechanisms without transforming those very mechanisms? See Giddens, "Reason Without Revolution?" p. 121. Habermas argues for a new balance between system and life-world, but he provides no suggestion as to how this might be achieved.

12. Murray Bookchin, "Finding the Subject: Notes on Whitebook and Habermas Ltd.," Telos 52 (1982): 78-98 at p. 83.

exhaustive overview of contemporary Critical Theory; my main concern is simply to identify and examine those themes and categories that are relevant to ecocentric emancipatory concerns.) This will help to explain, on the one hand, why Habermas regards the radical ecology movement as defensive and "neo-romantic" and, on the other hand, why ecocentric theorists would regard many of Habermas's theoretical categories as unnecessarily rigid and anthropocentric.

However, I also argue that Habermas' social and political theory has produced some important theoretical insights that do enrich emancipatory ecopolitical thought. In particular, his communicative ethics provide an elaborate theoretical defence and extension of the Green commitment to grassroots democracy and the expansion of moral and aesthetic discourse vis-a-vis technical discourse. Ultimately, however, I argue that Habermasian Critical Theory merely extends the human emancipatory theme but does nothing to further the emancipation of the nonhuman world - indeed, he counsels against the latter.

On the other hand, a central theme of the early Frankfurt School theorists, namely, the hope for a reconciliation of the negative dialectics of Enlightenment that would liberate both human and nonhuman nature, speaks directly to ecocentric concerns. While Adorno and Horkheimer were pessimistic as to the prospect of such a reconciliation ever occurring, Marcuse remained hopeful of the possibility that a "new science" might be developed, based on a more expressive and empathic relationship to the nonhuman world. This stands in stark contrast to Habermas's position - that science and technology can only know nature in instrumental terms since that is the only way in which it can be effective in terms of securing our survival as a species. Unlike Habermas, who saw work, science, and technology as rooted in our species' "quasi-transcendental" interest in survival (which shaped and limited how humans may "know" nature, namely, instrumentally), Marcuse saw science as a historically relative project. That is, he believed that a qualitatively different society might produce a qualitatively different science and technology. Ultimately, however, I show that Marcuse's notion of a "new science" remained vague and undeveloped and, in any event, was finally overshadowed - indeed contradicted - by his overriding

concern for the emancipation of the human senses and the freeing up of the instinctual drives of the individual. As we saw in the previous chapter, this required nothing short of the total abolition of necessary labour and the rational mastery of nature, a feat that could only be achieved by advanced technology and widespread automation.

I conclude that neither the early Frankfurt School theorists (including Marcuse) nor Habermas offer a satisfactory resolution of the ecological crisis from an ecocentric perspective, although they both make important (and quite different) contributions to the anthropocentric emancipatory stream of ecopolitical thought. Both proceed on the basis of an abstract idea of science and a simplistic equation between science, technology, and instrumental reason. Such an understanding overlooks the cosmological aspect of science, namely, the many ways in which science enhances our understanding of our origins and our place in the larger scheme of things. Such an understanding also overlooks how science itself has pointed to the limits of instrumental reason in our dealings with nature.

The Legacy of Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse

While the primary focus of this chapter will be on Habermas's contribution, it will be helpful to begin with an examination of the major innovations of the Frankfurt School's intellectual pioneers, in whose footsteps Leiss, Habermas, and others have followed. In particular, the contributions of Horkheimer and Adorno in the 1940s, and Marcuse in the 1950s and 1960s, contain a number of theoretical insights that foreshadowed the ecological critique of industrial society that was to develop from the late 1960s.[13] Indeed, these insights might have provided a useful theoretical starting point for ecocentric emancipatory theorists by providing a potential theoretical linkage between the domination of the human and nonhuman

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13. Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, Dialectic of Enlightenment, trans. John Cummings (London: Verso, 1979) - this work was written during the second World War and first published in 1944. As Albrecht Wellmer has argued, it is this work that has had the greatest impact on post-war Critical Theory in Germany. See Albrecht Wellmer, "Reason, Utopia, and the Dialectic of Enlightenment," Praxis International 3 (1983): 83-108 at p. 91.

worlds. By drawing back from the preoccupation with class conflict as the "motor of history" and examining instead the conflict between humans and the rest of nature, Horkheimer and Adorno developed a critique that sought to transcend the socialist preoccupation with questions concerning the control and distribution of the fruits of the industrial order. In short, they replaced the critique of political economy with a critique of technological civilization. As Martin Jay has observed, they found a conflict whose origins pre-dated capitalism and whose continuation (and probable intensification) appeared likely to survive the demise of capitalism.[14] Domination was recognized as increasingly assuming a range of noneconomic guises, including the subjugation of women and cruelty to animals - matters that had been largely overlooked by Marxists.[15] The Frankfurt School also criticized Marxism for reifying nature as little more than raw material for exploitation, thereby foreshadowing aspects of the more recent ecocentric emancipatory critique of Marxism (discussed in the previous chapter). Horkheimer and Adorno argued that this stemmed from the uncritical way in which Marxism had inherited and perpetuated the paradoxes of the Enlightenment tradition - their central target. In this respect, Marxism was regarded as no different from liberal capitalism.

Horkheimer and Adorno's contribution was essentially conducted in the form of a critique of reason. Their goal was to rescue reason in such a way as to bring instrumental reason under the control of "objective" or critical reason. By "objective reason" Adorno and Horkheimer meant that synthetic faculty of mind that engages in critical reflection and goes beyond mere appearances to a deeper reality in order to reconcile the contradictions between reality and appearance. This was to be contrasted with "instrumental reason," that one-sided faculty of mind that structures the phenomenal world in a commonsensical, functional way and is concerned with efficient and effective adaptation, with means not ends. The Institute sought to

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14. Jay, The Dialectical Imagination, p. 256.

15. Ibid., p. 257 (see Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 84 and pp. 245-55). Friedrich Engels' discussion of the subjugation of women in The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1940) is, of course, an important exception.

defend reason from attacks on both sides, that is, from those who reacted against the rigidity of abstract rationalism (e.g., the romantics) and from those who asserted the epistemological supremacy of the methods of the natural sciences (i.e., "the positivists"). The task of Critical Theory was to foster a mutual critique and reconciliation of these two forms of reason. In particular, reason was hailed by Marcuse as an essential "critical tribunal" that was the core of any progressive social theory; it lay at the root of Critical Theory's utopian impulse.[16]

According to Horkheimer and Adorno, the Age of Enlightenment had ushered in the progressive replacement of tradition, myth, and superstition with reason, but it did so at a price. The high ideals of that period had become grossly distorted as a result of the ascendancy of instrumental reason over critical reason, a process that Max Weber had decried as simultaneously leading to the rationalization and disenchantment of the world. The result, as Martin Jay has observed, was an inflated sense of human self-importance and a quest to dominate nature:

> At the root of the Enlightenment's project of domination, Horkheimer and Adorno charged, was a secularized version of the religious belief that God controlled the world. As a result, the human subject confronted the natural object as an inferior, external other. At least primitive animism, for all its lack of self-consciousness, had expressed an awareness of the interpenetration of the two spheres. This was totally lost in Enlightenment thought, where the world was seen as composed of lifeless, fungible atoms: "Animism had spiritualized objects; industrialism objectified spirits."[17]

Horkheimer and Adorno argued that this overemphasis on human autonomy and sovereignty led, paradoxically, to a loss of freedom. This was because the instrumental manipulation of nature that flowed from the anthropocentric view that humans were the measure of all things and the masters of nature inevitably gave rise to the objectification and manipulation of humans:

> Men pay for the increase in their power with alienation from that over which they exercise their power. Enlightenment behaves towards things as a dictator towards men. He knows them insofar as he can manipulate them. The man of science knows things insofar as he can make them. In this way their potentiality is turned towards his ends. In the metamorphosis the nature of

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16. See Martin Jay, "The Frankfurt School and the Genesis of Critical Theory," in The Unknown Dimension: European Marxism Since Lenin, eds. Dick Howard and Karl E. Klare (New York: Basic Books, 1972), pp. 224-48, especially pp. 240-41.

17. Jay, The Dialectical Imagination, p. 260.

> things, as the substratum of domination, is revealed as always the same. This identity constitutes the unity of nature.[18]

The first generation of Critical Theorists also argued that the "rational" domination of outer nature necessitated a similar domination of inner nature by means of the repression and renunciation of the instinctual, aesthetic, and expressive aspects of our being. This was the paradox that lay at the heart of the growth of reason. The attempt to create a free society of autonomous individuals was self-vitiating because it distorted the subjective conditions necessary for the realization of that freedom.[19] The more we seek material expansion in our quest for freedom from traditional and natural constraints, the more we become distorted psychologically as we deny those aspects of our own nature that are incompatible with instrumental reason. (Recall here, from Chapter 1, Bahro's ironic welcoming of the ecological crisis for forcing us to re-examine the belief that the road to human freedom lay in material expansion). As Alford has observed, Horkheimer and Adorno condemned "not merely science but the Western intellectual tradition that understands reason as effective adaptation."[20] Whereas Weber had described the process of rationalization as resulting in the disenchantment of the world, Horkheimer and Adorno described it as resulting in the "revenge of nature." As we saw above, this was reflected in the gradual undermining of our biological support system and in a new kind of repression of the human psyche. Such "psychic repression" was offered as an explanation for the modern individual's blind susceptibility, during times of social and economic crisis, to follow a demagogue such as Hitler who is able to offer the alienated individual a sense of meaning and belonging. From a Critical Theory perspective, then, just as the totalitarianism of Nazism was premised on the will to engineer social problems out of existence, the bureaucratic state and corporate capitalism may be seen as seeking to engineer ecological problems out of existence.

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18. Adorno and Horkheimer, Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 9.

19. This theme has also been pursued by Eric Fromm in Escape from Freedom (New York: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston, 1969).

20. C. Fred Alford, Science and the Revenge of Nature: Marcuse and Habermas (Tampa/Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1985), p. 16.

Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse longed for "the resurrection of nature" - a new kind of mediation between society and the natural world. Whitebook has described this resurrection as referring to "the transformation of our relation to and knowledge of nature such that nature would once again be taken as purposeful, meaningful or as possessing value."[21] This did not mean a nostalgic regress into primitive animism or pre-Enlightenment mythologies that sacrificed critical reason - the phenomenon of Nazism demonstrated the dangers of such a simplistic solution. Rather, their utopia required the integrated recapture of the past. This involved remembering rather than forgetting the experiences and ways of being of earlier human cultures and realizing that the modern rationalization process and the increasing differentiation of knowledge (particularly the factual, the normative, and the expressive) has been both a learning and unlearning process. As Albrecht Wellmer has explained it:

> Critical Theory could be said to be based on an idea of reason which comprises the image of a harmonious unity of the collective life-process, a situation in which the opposition between volonte generale [the general will] and the individual's will and needs, as well as the opposition between our rational faculties and our sensuous nature will be overcome.[22]

Yet Adorno and Horkheimer recognized that their utopia was very much against the grain of history. Unlike Marx, they stressed the radical discontinuity between the march of history and the liberated society they would like to see. As we saw, this sprang from the lack of a revolutionary subject that would be able to usher in the reconciliation of humanity with inner and outer nature. After all, how could there be a revolutionary subject when the individual in mass society had undergone such psychological distortion and was no longer autonomous? Accordingly, they were unable to develop a revolutionary praxis to further their somewhat vague utopian dream. However they insisted that the utopian impulse that fuelled that dream, although never fully realizable, must be maintained as providing an essential source of critical distance that guarded against any passive surrender to the status quo.

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21. Joel Whitebook, "The Problem of Nature in Habermas," Telos 40 (1979): 41-69 at p. 55.

22. Wellmer, "Reason, Utopia, and the Dialectic of Enlightenment," p. 91.

Although Herbert Marcuse explored the same negative dialectics as Adorno and Horkheimer, he reached a marginally more optimistic conclusion concerning the likelihood of a revolutionary praxis developing. In particular, he saw the counterculture and student movements of the 1960s and early 1970s as developing a more expressive relationship to nature that was co-operative, aesthetic - even erotic. Here, he suggested, were the seeds of a new movement that could expose the ideological functions of technocratic rationality and mount a far-reaching challenge to the "false" needs generated by modern consumer society that had dulled the individual's capacity for critical reflection.[23] Marcuse saw aesthetic needs as a subversive force since they enabled things to be seen and appreciated in their own right.[24] Indeed, he argued that the emancipation of the senses and the release of instinctual needs was a prerequisite to the liberation of nature (both internal and external). In the case of the former, this meant the liberation of our primary impulses and aesthetic senses. In the case of the latter, it meant the overcoming of our incessant struggle with our environment and the recovery of the "life-enhancing forces in nature, the sensuous aesthetic qualities which are foreign to a life wasted in unending competitive performance."[25]

Marcuse also suggested that sensuous perception might form the epistemological basis of a new science that would overcome the one-dimensionality of instrumental reason that underpinned modern science. Under a new science, Marcuse envisaged that knowledge might become a source of pleasure rather than the means of extending human control. The natural world would be perceived and responded to in an open, more passive and receptive way and be guided by the object of study (rather than by human purposes). Such a new science would also reveal previously undisclosed aspects of nature that could inspire and guide human

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23. Marcuse, One Dimensional Man (London: Abacus, 1972). For a critique of Marcuse's distinction between true and false needs, see Robert Hoffman, "Marcuse's One-Dimensional Vision," Philosophy of the Social Sciences 2 (1972): 43-59.

24. Marcuse, Counterrevolution and Revolt (London: Allen Lane, 1972), p. 74.

25. Ibid., pp. 72 and 60.

conduct.[26] This was to be contrasted with modern "Galilean" science, which Marcuse saw as "the 'methodology' of a pre-given historical reality within whose universe it moves" - it reflects an interest in experiencing, comprehending, and shaping the world "in terms of calculable, predictable relationships among exactly identifiable units. In this project, universal quantifiability is a prerequisite for the domination of nature."[27]

Habermas has taken issue with Marcuse, claiming that it is logically impossible to imagine that a new science could be developed that would overcome the manipulative and domineering attitude towards nature characteristic of modern science.[28] There are certainly passages in Marcuse's One Dimensional Man that suggest that it is the scientific method itself that has ultimately led to the domination of humans and that therefore a change in the very method of scientific inquiry is necessary to usher in a liberated society.[29] Against Habermas's interpretation, however, William Leiss has argued that these are isolated, inconsistent passages that run contrary to the main line of Marcuse's argument, which is that the problem is not with science or technocratic rationality per se but "with the repressive social

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26. Ibid., p. 60. Marcuse argued that instead of seeing nature as mere utility, "the emancipated senses, in conjunction with a natural science proceeding on their basis, would guide the 'human appropriation' of nature."

27. One Dimensional Man, pp. 133-34.

28. Jurgen Habermas, Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science, and Politics, trans. Jeremy J. Shapiro (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1971), pp. 85-87.

29. For example, Marcuse has stated: "The principles of modern science were a priori structured in such a way that they could serve as conceptual instruments for a universe of self-propelling, productive control; theoretical operationalism came to correspond to practical operationalism. The scientific method [which] led to the ever-more-effective domination of nature thus came to provide the pure concepts as well as the instrumentalities for the ever-more-effective domination of man by man through the domination of nature" (One Dimensional Man, p. 130). And later: "The point which I am trying to make is that science, by virtue of its own method and concepts, has projected and promoted a universe in which the domination of nature has remained linked to the domination of man - a link which tends to be fatal to the universe as a whole" (ibid., p. 136).

institutions which exploit the achievements of that rationality to preserve unjust relationships among men."[30]

Yet these inconsistencies in Marcuse's discussion of the relationship between science and liberation do not appear to be resolvable either way. Indeed, it is possible to discern a third position that lies somewhere between Habermas's and Leiss's interpretations (although it is closer to Leiss's): that the fault lies neither with science nor technocratic rationality per se nor repressive social institutions per se but rather with the instrumental and anthropocentric character of the modern world-view. In One Dimensional Man, Marcuse was concerned to highlight the inextricable interrelationship between science and society. He conceded that pure as distinct from applied science "does not project particular practical goals nor particular forms of domination," but it does proceed in a certain universe of discourse and cannot transcend that discourse.[31] According to Marcuse,

> ... scientific rationality was in itself, in its very abstractness and purity, operational in as much as it developed under an instrumental horizon ... This interpretation would tie the scientific project (method and theory), prior to all application and utilization, to a specific societal project, and would see the tie precisely in the inner form of scientific rationality, i.e., the functional character of its concepts [my emphasis].[32]

It is clear that Marcuse regarded the scientific method as being dependent on a pre-established universe of ends, in which and for which it has developed.[33] It follows, as he points out in Counterrevolution and Revolt, that:

> A free society may well have a very different a priori and a very different object; the development of the scientific concepts may be grounded in an experience of nature as a totality of life to be protected and "cultivated," and technology would apply this science to the reconstruction of the environment of life.[34]

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30. William Leiss, "Technological Rationality: Marcuse and His Critics," Philosophy of the Social Sciences 2 (1972): 31-42 at pp. 34-35. This essay also appears as an appendix to Leiss, The Domination of Nature, pp. 199-212.

31. One Dimensional Man, p. 129.

32. Ibid., pp. 129 and 131.

33. Ibid., p. 137.

34. Marcuse, Counterrevolution and Revolt, p. 61.

Marcuse's point is a very general one: that a new or liberatory science can only be inaugurated by a liberatory society. It would be a "new" science because it would serve a new pre-established universe of ends, including a qualitatively new relationship between humans and the rest of nature. This third interpretation is much closer to Leiss's interpretation than Habermas's since it argues that we must re-order social relations before we re-order science if we wish to "resurrect" nature. Only then would we be able to cultivate a liberatory rather than a repressive mastery of nature.

Yet it is important to clarify what Marcuse meant by a "liberatory mastery of nature." As Alford has convincingly shown, Marcuse's new science appears as mere rhetoric when judged against the overall thrust of his writings.[35] As I pointed out in the previous chapter, Marcuse's principal Marxian reference was the Paris Manuscripts, which Marcuse saw as providing the philosophical grounding for the realization of the emancipation of the senses and the reconciliation of nature. Moreover, his particular Marx/Freud synthesis was concerned to overcome repressive dominance, that is, the repression of the pleasure principle (the gratification of the instincts) by the reality principle (the latter being the need to transform and modify nature in order to survive, which is reflected in the work ethic and the growth of instrumental reason). Marcuse saw the reality principle as being culturally specific to an economy of scarcity. In capitalist society, the forces of production had developed to the point where scarcity (which gave rise to the "reality principle") need no longer be a permanent feature of human civilization. That is, the technical and productive apparatus was seen to be capable of meeting basic necessities with minimum toil so that there was no longer any basis for the repression of the instincts via the dominance of the work ethic. The continuance of this ethic must be seen as "surplus repression," which Marcuse maintained was secured, inter alia, by the manipulation of false consumer needs.[36] Marcuse ultimately wished to reap the full benefits promised by

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35. Alford, Science and the Revenge of Nature, pp. 49-68.

36. Herbert Marcuse, Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1956), especially pp. 35, 37, and 87-88.

mainstream science, namely, a world where humans were spared the drudgery of labour and are free to experience "eros and peace."

However, the necessary quid pro quo for the reassertion of the pleasure principle over the reality principle was that the nonhuman world would continue to be sacrificed in the name of human liberation. As we saw in the previous chapter, Marcuse shared Marx's notion of two mutually exclusive realms of freedom and necessity and, like Marx, he believed that "true freedom" lay beyond the realm of labour. Accordingly, total automation, made possible by scientific and technological progress, was essential on the ground that labour was regarded as inherently unfree and burdensome in that it demanded that humans subordinate their desires and expressive instincts to the requirements of the "objective situation" (i.e., economic laws, the market, and the need to make a livelihood). I have already discussed the limitations of humanist eco-Marxism in the previous chapter and need not repeat all of those criticisms here. It will suffice simply to emphasize that socialist stewardship under humanist eco-Marxism would usher in a "reconciliation with nature" of a kind that would see to the total domestication of the nonhuman world. As Malinovich has observed, "for Marcuse the concept of the 'development of human potentiality for its own sake' became the ultimate socialist value."[37] In Marcuse's own words, the emancipation of the human senses under a humanistic socialism would enable

> ... "the human appropriation of nature," i.e., through the transformation of nature into an environment (medium) for the human being as "species being"; free to develop the specifically human faculties: the creative, aesthetic faculties.[38]

Despite his intriguing discussion of the notion of a new, nondomineering science, then, Marcuse's major pre-occupation with human self-expression, gratification, and the free play of the senses ultimately overshadowed his concern for the liberation of nonhuman nature. Any nonanthropocentric gloss that Marcuse may have placed on Marx's Paris Manuscripts must be read down in this context.

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37. Myriam Miedzian Malinovich, "On Herbert Marcuse and the Concept of Psychological Freedom," Social Research 49 (1982): 158-80 at p. 164.

38. Marcuse, Counterrevolution and Revolt, p. 64.

Nonetheless, I show below that Marcuse's "ecocentric moments" (i.e., his discussion of a qualitatively different science and society that approach the nonhuman world as a partner rather than as an object of manipulation) serve as a useful foil to Habermas's more limited conceptualization of the scientific project. I will return to this issue in my discussion of Habermas's social and political theory.

Habermasian Revisions

Habermas has carried forward but extensively revised the early Frankfurt School's critique of instrumental reason in advanced industrial society. He has argued that the advance of instrumental reason has led to the "scientization of politics," that process whereby social and environmental problems are increasingly posed as technical problems requiring technical solutions by experts rather than as political problems that need to be addressed, first and foremost, by an informed citizenry.[39] According to Habermas, this is part of a larger process that has been taking place over the last two hundred years - beginning with Hobbes - involving the gradual demise of the classical doctrine of politics (which had entailed the cultivation of practical wisdom) and the emergence of specialized social sciences that emulate the methodology of the natural sciences.[40] The result is that the achievement of a rational, democratic consensus by an informed citizenry concerning societal goals is being increasingly subverted by a technical discussion by a minority of experts concerning means (based on presupposed ends, namely, economic growth, the expansion of the bureaucratic-technical apparatus, and the domination of human and nonhuman nature). This has led to the depoliticization, manipulation, and unacknowledged domination of the majority of the population by a technical and bureaucratic elite and the concomitant withering of the "public sphere" (culminating in the decline of parliament as a meaningful forum for debate). According to

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39. See Jurgen Habermas, "The Scientization of Politics and Public Opinion," in Toward a Rational Society, pp. 62-80.

40. See, for example, Jurgen Habermas, "The Classical Doctrine of Politics in Relation to Social Philosophy," in Theory and Practice, trans. John Viertel (London: Heinemann, 1977), pp. 41-81.

Habermas, reason has lost the critical force it once had. It is now degraded to mean only instrumental reason with the result that "the industrially most advanced societies seem to approximate the model of behavioural control steered by external stimuli rather than guided by norms."[41]

Unlike his Frankfurt School predecessors, however, Habermas does not argue for the "resurrection of a fallen nature," that is, a healing of the rift between humanity and nonhuman nature that has been brought about by the rationalization process. Nor does he accept the need for a "new science." Instead, Habermas has taken a different path by locating instrumental reason within a larger and more comprehensive theory of rationality. He has criticized Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse's central thesis - that the domination of "external" nature leads inexorably to the domination of "internal" (i.e., human) nature - and has argued that the proper mastery of "external" and "internal" nature does not follow the same logic of instrumental rationality. Habermas has posited instead a dualistic framework whereby the logic of instrumental rationality governs our dealings with the nonhuman world and the logic of communicative rationality governs interaction between human subjects. According to Habermas, the former necessarily aims at reification (in order to be effective) whereas in the case of the latter reification is a possible but a pathological outcome (the proper telos is autonomy, individuation, and socialization).[42]

According to Habermas, Marcuse's new science, which seeks to approach nature as a partner rather than as an object of technical control, confuses two different structures of action, namely, symbolic interaction/communication (the project of language) and purposive-rational action (the project of labour).[43] Labour and its extension - technology - are seen as forming an indispensable part of the survival project of the human species as a whole. Science and technology, according to

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41. Jurgen Habermas, "Technology and Science as 'Ideology,'" in Toward a Rational Society, pp. 81-122 at p. 107.

42. See Joel Whitebook, "The Problem of Nature in Habermas," p. 43.

43. Ibid.

Habermas, are determined by the objective character of human labour, which is to wrestle with nonhuman nature (the bounty of which is all too scarce) in order to extract a livelihood. This relationship of labour (and technology) to nature is presented as having a "quasi-transcendental" status; it is not historically relative but rather is a kind of biological drive that is rooted in the species. It is on this ground that Habermas maintains that we can only know nature (through our work and technology) as an object of instrumental control.

In Knowledge and Human Interests Habermas identified three basic cognitive interests that guide the production of knowledge: the technical, the practical, and the emancipatory. The mode of inquiry of the technical interest is the empirical-analytic sciences, which are based on the requirements of labour and are concerned with producing nomological knowledge (i.e., law-like generalizations concerning the behaviour of natural and social phenomena) that enables the prediction and control of events. In contrast, the practical cognitive interest, the concern of the historical-hermeneutic sciences, is based on interaction and is directed toward interpretive understanding, that is, "securing and expanding the possibilities of mutual and self understanding in the conduct of life."[44] The emancipatory interest, whose mode of inquiry is critical reflection and whose exemplars are the Marxian critique of ideology and Freudian psychoanalysis, is based on power and is concerned to secure the autonomy of the individual via the recognition of unnecessary constraints (e.g., alienated work, distorted communication). The last mentioned interest is the guiding inspiration for Critical Theory.

By separating labour and communication and grounding them in different cognitive interests (i.e., technical control and understanding), Habermas was able to reject the early Frankfurt School's pessimistic thesis that technical progress necessarily entailed moral regression and the distortion of the psychological conditions of emancipation. His proposed reforms are intended to circumscribe the

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44. Thomas McCarthy, The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 56.

application of instrumental reason so that it remains subservient to the sphere of interaction between human beings. As Alford has put it, "the goal of Habermas's project can be expressed in one sentence: to prevent social relations from becoming like our relations with the natural world."[45] The upshot is that the domination of nonhuman nature would continue as a legitimate project of the human species but that it would no longer entail the domination of humans in the way that the earlier Frankfurt School theorists had believed. Indeed, Habermas has hailed the progressive features of modernity and rejected what he regards as the "utopian excesses" of the early Frankfurt School theorists (such as their hope for the "reconciliation of nature"). The disenchantment of nature is accepted as the necessary price of modernity.

According to Habermas, the problems of advanced industrial societies do not stem from instrumental rationality per se but rather from the fact that instrumental rationality has not been accompanied or matched by a concomitant rationalization of social norms in the sphere of communication. By rationalization of social norms, Habermas means the establishment of a participatory democracy that provides the opportunity for undistorted communication and the achievement of a rational and universalistic normative consensus. These norms are to be found in what Habermas refers to as "the ideal speech situation." Instrumental reason is presented as a specialized language abstracted out of ordinary communication, which, in turn, presupposes certain basic norms against which we may locate distortions in any given communication. As Habermas explains:

> What raises us out of nature is the only thing whose nature we can know: language. Through its structure, autonomy and responsibility are posited for us. Our first sentence expresses unequivocally the intention of universal and unconstrained consensus. Taken together, autonomy and responsibility constitute the only Idea that we possess a priori in the sense of the philosophical tradition.[46]

The norms that Habermas argues are implicit in every act of consensual communication are (i) that what each speaker says is intelligible or meaningful; (ii) that what each speaker says is true in terms of the propositional content of the

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45. Alford, Science and the Revenge of Nature, p. 77.

46. Jurgen Habermas, Knowledge and Human Interests, trans. Jeremy Shapiro (London: Heinemann, 1972), p. 314.

statements; (iii) that each speaker communicates truthfully, with genuineness of intent (i.e., without guile or dishonesty); and (iv) that what each speaker says is rationally justifiable. Habermas's solution to the problem of the "scientization of politics," then, is not the reform of the logic of instrumental rationality per se but rather the reinvigoration of the public sphere (of "interaction") so that society can direct instrumental reason toward rationally justified ends.

Habermas's ideas and concerns have evolved considerably since he first took issue with the ideas of the early Frankfurt School. For example, instead of labour and interaction, he is now more likely to speak of "system" and "life-world," corresponding to purposive and communicative rationality respectively.[47] And in The Theory of Communicative Action he has moved away from a discussion of "quasi-transcendental" cognitive interests, preferring to ground Critical Theory in language or, more precisely, communication as distinct from epistemology.[48] In this recent project Habermas has outlined a theory of communication that is concerned to identify and clarify the conditions for human communication. A central purpose of this project has been to show that "the emancipatory critique does not rest on arbitrary norms that we 'choose'; rather it is grounded in the very structure of intersubjective communicative competences."[49] None of these new theoretical endeavours, however, have altered his basic division between labour and interaction and between instrumental and practical reason. They simply represent an elaboration of the conceptual foundations of the practical and emancipatory cognitive interests, that is, a continuation of certain themes developed in his earlier work. Moreover, as I show in the following discussion, Habermas has stood by the fundamentally anthropocentric

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47. Jurgen Habermas, Legitimation Crisis, trans. Thomas McCarthy (London: Heinemann, 1976); Jurgen Habermas, The Theory of Communicative Action, vol 1: Reason and the Rationalization of Society (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984); and The Theory of Communicative Action, vol. 2: Life-world and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987).

48. For an overview of this general shift (in relation to vol. 1 of The Theory of Communicative Action) see Richard J. Bernstein's "Introduction" in Bernstein, ed., Habermas and Modernity (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985).

49. Bernstein, Habermas and Modernity, p. 17.

framework of his communication theory in his major reply to ecologically oriented criticisms of his theory of cognitive interests.[50] A critical discussion of these earlier ideas and categories (along with Habermas's response to his ecological critics) is therefore essential to understanding the anthropocentric framework of Critical Theory and assessing its relevance to ecocentric emancipatory political theory.

The Ecocentric Critique

There are two interrelated levels at which Habermas's Critical Theory conflicts with a comprehensive ecocentric political theory. The first level relates to the kinds of dealings humans can have with the nonhuman world. The second relates to the kinds of inter-human communications prescribed by Habermas's ideal speech situation. In the following critique I address both levels in the course of challenging Habermas's separation and privileging of human emancipation vis-a-vis the emancipation of nonhuman nature. In particular, I take issue with Habermas's unnecessarily limited and rigid categorization of cognitive interests and his associated claim that we can only know nature (through science and technology) insofar as we can control it. My central claim is that the rigid character of these distinctions effectively serves to legitimate the continued exploitation of nonhuman nature, endorsing rather than challenging dominant anthropocentric prejudices toward the nonhuman world. I begin with a critique of Habermas's claim that instrumental reason is always the most "efficacious" form of reason to apply in our dealings with the nonhuman world. I then proceed to a critical discussion of the likely character and limits of "ecological reason" in a communicatively rationalized society. Finally, I outline what an ecocentric science might look like and distinguish it from both Marcuse's utopian "new science" and Habermas's unduly narrow and instrumental science, which, by definition, can only "know" nature insofar as it can control it.

Although Habermas has made only occasional reference to the ecology crisis in his extensive writings, the general outlines of a Habermasian solution to the crisis

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50. Jurgen Habermas, "A Reply to My Critics," in Habermas: Critical Debates, eds. John B. Thompson and David Held (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), see pp. 219-83, especially pp. 238-50.

are clearly discernible.[51] Although he has argued that, in a rational society, instrumental reason would be made subservient to the norms established by practical reason as a result of free discussion, he also insists that (whatever these norms) a rational society would continue to apply, and would only apply, instrumental reason to our dealings with the nonhuman world through our work and technology. Indeed, our environmental problems must necessarily be solved by the application of instrumental reason according to Habermas because that is the only kind of reason that Habermas considers to be efficacious in our dealings with nature from the point of view of our species' cognitive interest in survival.

Habermas's insistence that we can only know nature in instrumental terms has attracted strong criticism from those who see his categories of thought as unduly limited and/or part of the cause of the environmental crisis rather than its solution.[52] According to Vincent Di Norcia,

> ... it is risky to deduce the human interest in nature from a technologically advanced culture's break with nature ... [although] one can see how the technical interest in control can take on the appearance of a species' interest for those within it.[53]

The fact that hunter gatherer societies and many agricultural civilizations do not appear to have proceeded from a "will to control" but have nonetheless managed to secure a livelihood points to the historical specificity of the modern drive to control and challenges the objective status of Habermas's technical interest.[54] As Henning

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51. In Legitimation Crisis, for example, Habermas includes the ecology crisis as one of the many pathologies of modernity (see pp. 41-43).

52. See, for example, Henning Ottmann, "Cognitive Interests and Self-reflection," in Habermas: Critical Debates, eds. John B. Thompson and David Held (London: Macmillan Press, 1982), pp. 78-97; McCarthy, The Critical Theory of Jurgen Habermas, p. 67; Alford, Science and the Revenge of Nature, Chapter 9; Vincent Di Norcia, "From Critical Theory to Critical Ecology," Telos 22 (1974-75): 86-95; Whitebook, "The Problem of Nature in Habermas"; and Bookchin, "Finding the Subject: Notes on Whitebook and Habermas Ltd.."

53. Di Norcia, "From Critical Theory to Critical Ecology," p. 90.

54. The lack of an apparent "will to control" in many traditional societies cannot be accounted for by the fact that such societies simply lacked the technological means to exploit nature. Other factors, such as cultural or religious values, must also be acknowledged. China's native religion of Taoism, for example, positively encouraged the Chinese peasantry (and more particularly, its rulers) to align themselves with, rather than seek to dominate, the "Way" of nature.

Ottmann has pointed out, it is only in modern times that we have assumed the Cartesian mantle of "masters and possessors of nature." Moreover, as Ottmann argues in pointing to the irony in this instrumental approach to nature,

> ... even if, in the name of the survival of the masses of contemporary humanity, we did not want to dispute the legitimacy of the modern type of mastery over nature entirely, nevertheless this does not mean that we should accept carte blanche the will to control and its modern form. A will to control, whose legitimacy is based on our need to survive and which is itself a threat to our survival, becomes dialectical. The technical interest in mastery over nature encounters a nature taking revenge upon the boundlessness of the will to control.[55]

Similarly, from an ecocentric perspective, environmental problems are likely to remain intractable in a Habermasian society owing to Habermas's insistence that the technical cognitive interest in control must remain untrammelled by an alternative sensibility if it is to be successful in the terms in which it has been defined. Ecocentric theorists argue that the mere refinement of our ability to manipulate and control nonhuman nature will simply give rise to more "technological fix" solutions that will perpetuate, or at best contain rather than solve, environmental problems since we can never be fully cognizant of all the interrelationships between the human and nonhuman worlds.[56] The Green revolution, for example, once widely hailed as an example of how instrumental reason - applied to agriculture - could alleviate world hunger, is now increasingly seen as creating ecological problems that ultimately have served to accentuate world hunger. Indeed, the ecology crisis may be seen as partly stemming from the extensive and over-confident application of instrumental reason to ecosystems and as therefore a reflection of some of its inherent limitations (particularly when applied on a grand scale) and of the need to cultivate an alternative human interest in nature.

The ecocentric critique of instrumental reason should not, however, be construed as an anti-science or anti-technology posture. Ecocentrism is simply against scientism (i.e., the conviction that empiric-analytic inquiry is the only valid

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55. Ottmann, "Cognitive Interests and Self-reflection," p. 89.

56. Gregory Bateson, Steps to an Ecology of Mind (Frogmore, St. Albans: Paladin, 1973), especially pp. 436-37.

way of knowing nature) and technocentrism (i.e., anthropocentric technological optimism). Indeed, as we saw in Chapter 2, ecocentric theorists are quick to point to the many ways in which science has served to undermine anthropocentric assumptions concerning our place in nature (points that seem to have escaped Habermas's attention). Moreover, as I argue below in discussing the question of a "new science," it is a caricature of science to regard it as concerned only with manipulation, prediction, and control - as Critical Theorists are want to do. Science also provides us with an understanding of our place in the rest of nature.

A new ecocentric "interest" in nature, then, need not and ought not be circumscribed by the objectified image of nature that is called forth by instrumental reason.[57] According to Di Norcia, an alternative human interest in nature

> ... must clearly ground and reinforce the emancipatory interest. An instrumental or utilitarian external attitude toward systems of which we are a part to the core of our being is mystifying and ideological. That is why the liberating form of interaction of ... [people] with nature should not be seen as instrumental or purposive-rational but as co-operative... social and natural emancipation co-determine each other.[58]

Yet even if we were to assume that further technical refinements would succeed in protecting human welfare (after all, this technical interest in nature is rooted in the survival needs of the human species and our technical interventions in ecosystems would therefore have to be adjusted in response to threats to those survival needs), the consequences would be disastrous from the point view of those species that are not presently or potentially useful to humankind. This is because Habermas's technical interest in control approaches the nonhuman world in purely instrumental terms and leaves no room for the recognition of the intrinsic value of the nonhuman world. While Habermas accepts that an empathic orientation toward nonhuman nature might infuse art and recreation, he denies the need for a conceptual shift from anthropocentrism to ecocentrism in relation to our most significant dealings with nature (i.e., work, science, and technology).

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57. For a pertinent discussion, see Andrew McLaughlin, "Is Science Successful? An Ecological View," Philosophical Inquiry 6 (1984): 39-46.

58. Di Norcia, "From Critical Theory to Critical Ecology," pp. 92 and 95.

To the above criticisms, Habermas has replied that he is simply making an epistemological as distinct from an ethical statement as to the type of reason that is capable of giving rise to theoretically fruitful knowledge, that is, knowledge that produces "efficacious results" from the perspective of our species' interest in material reproduction and survival.[59] We may, he argues, have noninstrumental encounters with nature (e.g., aesthetic experiences) but these encounters do not produce efficacious results in the way that instrumental reason does through its systematic observation, objectification, manipulation, and control of natural phenomena. Habermas agrees that "the moralization of our dealings with external nature" would indeed lead to the "reenchantment of the world" but disapproves of such a step on the ground that it would involve a regression, an undoing of the differentiation of knowledge that Habermas has categorized in his theory of cognitive interests as being the progressive outcome of the Enlightenment. As Habermas explains:

> We cannot expect to be able to use the experiential potential gathered in non-objectivating dealings with external nature for purposes of knowledge and to make them theoretically fruitful... Such attempts would have to lead back to metaphysics, and thus behind the levels of learning reached in the modern age into a reenchanted world.[60]

There are two counter-replies to Habermas's reply. First, Habermas has not shown that pure instrumental reason is always the most efficacious form of reason from the stand-point of human well-being and survival. The Green revolution example referred to above attests to that. Moreover, Alford has argued that Habermas's claim that only an instrumental attitude is compatible with theoretically fruitful knowledge of nature (which includes "external" nature as well as our bodies and our "internal" [i.e., psychological] nature) does not hold up. He points out that medical anthropology is replete with examples of so-called primitive techniques of healing that are mediated by a "communicative attitude" towards nature and which are nonetheless efficacious in terms of achieving the intended results.[61] Similarly, the

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59. Jurgen Habermas, "A Reply to my Critics," p. 241.

60. Ibid., p. 245.

61. Alford, Science and the Revenge of Nature, pp. 152-56.

farming and fishing techniques of many traditional cultures are often more "efficacious" from a long term point of view than the modern agricultural, forestry, and fishing techniques that have so often replaced such traditional techniques. A more modern example can be found in the practice of biodynamic farming, which is mediated by a symbiotic and communicative relationship with the land. Although this practice cannot be fully explained by modern science, it is demonstrably efficacious from the point of view of results. Of course, many of these traditional techniques contain elements of instrumental reason; the point, however, is that they are also infused with other forms of reason that mediate and guide the technique and which, from the practitioners' point of view, are part and parcel of the technique's particular kind of efficacy.

Second, and in any event, ecocentric theorists ask how "efficacious" do we want our dealings with the rest of nature to be (i.e., at what cost and from whose perspective)? Habermas's epistemological separation of the communication and technical spheres is intended to ensure that the latter is untrammelled by the former, that it operates without cultural, aesthetic, ethical, or religious restraint in order that it be successful in furthering its supposed quasi-transcendental interest in control. This raises the question as to how instrumental reason could possibly be tamed in its application in the way that Habermas proposes, that is, made subservient to discursively adjudicated norms. It would seem that ecologically benign interventions in ecosystems can only be guaranteed if instrumental reason is allowed to be infused with and tempered by - rather than simply instructed by - normative considerations concerning human well-being and respect for other life-forms. As we shall see in the following section, Habermas's ethics of communications can provide no guarantee that a rational eco-technics will emerge from a rationalized sphere of communication.

The Character and Limits of Ecological Reason in Critical Theory

According to Habermas's schema, a norm is considered "right" if it is achieved via a consensus reached between truthful, uncoerced, and rational agents. It

follows that if a "speech community" agrees, after free and rational discussion, to direct technology in such a way as to continue to manipulate and subjugate "external nature," then Critical Theory can raise no objection since its concept of emancipation has been exhausted (its exclusive concern being with human self-determination).

John Dryzek, in an otherwise persuasive application of Habermas's communicative ethics to the ecology crisis, openly concedes that there is no guarantee that individuals in a communicatively rationalized society would necessarily agree to give any primacy to ecological values.[62] (And it should be noted here that the kind of "ecological rationality" defended by Dryzek is essentially limited to the Resource Conservation and Human Welfare Ecology perspectives that I outlined in Chapter 2; that is, ecological rationality is defined as "the capability of ecosystems consistently and effectively to provide the good of human life support."[63]) However, Dryzek does argue that a communicatively rationalized setting would be more conducive to ecological rationality than the piecemeal approach of the ideal-typical Popperian "open society" toward which liberal/pluralist democracies aspire. According to this liberal/pluralist model, political decisions concerning "who gets what, when, and how" are contested primarily by interested parties. Moreover, Dryzek argues that the formulation and implementation of public policies proceeds in a piecemeal fashion by way of "conjecture and refutation" in the same way that scientific theories are "tested" by the scientific community. According to Dryzek, this kind of decision making proceeds on the basis of "an instrumental problem solving" concept of rationality, that is, one "which involves devising and selecting means to ends, specifying tests to indicate the adequacy of means, and then criticizing these means in the light of

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62. Dryzek, Rational Ecology.

63. Ibid., p. 36. Dryzek acknowledges the limitations of what he calls his "anthropocentric life-support" approach but argues that this approach is merely a "minimal" one that "can meet competing forms of functional rationality (whether economic, social, legal, or political) on their own ground: the ground of specifically human interests. Ecological rationality can therefore be made commensurable with its opposition" (p. 35). A similar kind of "ecological rationality" (which draws on Habermas) has been offered by Timothy Luke and Stephen White in "Critical Theory, the Informational Revolution, and an Ecological Path to Modernity," p. 30. See also Stephen K. White, The Recent Work of Jurgen Habermas: Reason, Justice and Modernity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 137-38.

experience."[64] Critical theory, on the other hand, is concerned to debate political ends via a disinterested discourse that is not corrupted by the pursuit of private interests (the question of appropriate means is considered to be secondary to the question of ultimate ends). In other words, a communicatively rationalized society provides for the proposal and rational acceptance of generalizable interests common to all humans. In this context Dryzek argues that

> ... the human life-support capacity of natural systems is the generalizable interest par excellence, standing as it does in logical antecedence to competing normative principles such as utility maximization or right protection.[65]

Dryzek adds the further qualifier that "the likelihood that ecological concerns will be reflected in social norms in communicatively rationalized settings could be enhanced, one suspects, if the community in question were small-scale and self-sufficient."[66]

Yet Dryzek also concedes the limitations of Habermas's Critical Theory, particularly its anthropocentric, instrumental human orientation toward the nonhuman world:

> Habermas sees technical or instrumental knowledge - natural science - and manipulative forms of practice as thoroughly appropriate to human dealings with the natural world ... Thus Habermas sees a discontinuity between the systems of the human world (potential subjects) and those of the natural world (inevitable objects). From the viewpoint of ecological rationality, this discontinuity is a misplaced decomposition of a non-reducible system.[67]

Despite this limitation in Habermas's communications theory, Dryzek concludes that a communicatively rationalized society is better than the modern Popperian open society from the point of view of ecological rationality. This is because the former at least holds the promise of a community developing a prudential and symbiotic orientation toward ecosystems (since it is concerned with defending generalizable interests) whereas such an orientation is forever beyond the reach of the latter (since it

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64. Dryzek, "Discursive Designs: Critical Theory and Political Institutions," American Journal of Political Science 31 (1987): 656-79 at p. 660.

65. Dryzek, Rational Ecology, p. 204.

66. Ibid., p. 205.

67. Ibid., p. 206. Why is this so? Dryzek suggests, inter alia, that it "may be rooted in a recognition that to be accorded full subject status an entity must have the potential to participate in social discourse. Clearly, the entities of the natural world fail this test" (p. 207).

is corrupted by private, sectional interests). Dryzek leaves the matter there, hoping that participants in a rational society will come to their senses by defining "problems broadly, in terms of sustainable life support from the ecosystems in question."[68] However, Dryzek goes on to say that

> It should be stressed that such treatment of ecological systems would be justified here in terms of human interests (by the ecological rationality standard), though some philosophers have argued for a similar treatment through reference to nature's "interest."[69]

Yet such a communicatively rationalized social democracy is merely a necessary as distinct from a sufficient condition for emancipation writ large because it only deals with emancipation in the context of one particular sphere of relations in the myriad relations that constitute the world. In particular, it ignores the requirements that are presupposed in a more fundamental sphere of relations than human communication, namely, ecological relations. Under Habermas's framework, ecological rationality (as defined by Dryzek) is merely a potential by-product of communicative rationality - notwithstanding the fundamental fact that the very possibility and continuance of practical reason depends on the prior application of ecological reason (i.e., the preservation of human life support).[70]

Now Habermas would probably reply that the refined application of instrumental reason to the nonhuman world would ensure the preservation of the polity (after all, that is its fundamental "interest.") Yet instrumental rationality and ecological rationality are not synonymous, as this reply assumes. The former presupposes a detached observer who is able to predict, manipulate, and control external objects and events. The latter recognizes the interdependence of the human and nonhuman worlds and the inherent complexity, nonreducibility, variability, uncertainty, spontaneity, and collective nature of ecological problems.[71] Even from

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68. Ibid., p. 209.

69. Ibid., p. 208.

70. It is on these grounds that many theorists have argued that ecological rationality is the most fundamental kind of reason. See, for example, Robert V. Bartlett, "Ecological Rationality: Reason and Environmental Policy," Environmental Ethics 8 (1986): 221-39 at p. 235.

within Dryzek's anthropocentric framework, these differences suggest that the quest for the complete mastery of nature through the application of instrumental reason is a deluded one - that we can no longer afford to approach the nonhuman world as merely so much manipulable matter. Indeed, Dryzek argues, unlike Habermas, that an ecologically rational human-nature relationship must be a symbiotic one.[72]

From an ecocentric perspective, there is clearly nothing in Habermas's ethics of communication that could redeem the instrumental character of the technical interest in control vis-a-vis the nonhuman world.[73] This is because Habermas's delineation of the sphere of communication is such that the discursively adjudicated norms are restricted to serving the interests of speaking human participants. In such a schema, nonspeaking nonhuman entities - the objects of technical control - cannot be morally considerable subjects. As Whitebook summarizes it: "the proper norms for regulating the relations between society and nature would somehow follow from the communicatively conceived idea of the human good life without reference to nature as an end-in-itself."[74] Habermas has endorsed these comments as an accurate extrapolation of his theory.[75] Indeed, Habermas readily concedes the anthropocentric framework of his discourse ethic but argues that the "ecological problematic" can be dealt with satisfactorily within this framework. As we have seen, this may be true from an anthropocentric perspective. But it is not an adequate answer from an ecocentric perspective since the ultimate moral referents in any consideration of ecological problems will only ever be the human participants in the dialogue. Would this leave any basis for the preservation of species and ecosystems that serve no

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71. On the nature of ecological problems, see Dryzek, Rational Ecology, pp. 26-33.

72. Ibid., p. 46.

73. It is conceivable that individuals in a communicatively rationalized society might collectively decide to extend their concept of ecological rationality beyond Dryzek's anthropocentric life-support approach by including other human interests in the nonhuman world (e.g., aesthetic, scientific, and recreational). The point, however, is that the framework would remain anthropocentric.

74. Whitebook, "The Problem of Nature in Habermas," p. 61.

75. Habermas, "A Reply to My Critics," p. 247.

purpose for humans? How can their well-being be safeguarded in the absence of any recognition of their moral standing?

Habermas can offer no guarantee that these "non-speaking interests" will be considered for their own sake. While he acknowledges that many of us share an intuition of "sympathetic solidarity" with the nonhuman world, he is unable to work the interests of nonhumans into his theory in any meaningful way because it is theoretically grounded in human speech acts. The egalitarian reciprocity that he regards as implicit in human communication "cannot be carried over into the relation between humans and nature in any strict sense" because it presupposes that the referents are free and autonomous human subjects.[76] Habermas concedes that the range of communicative actions is broader than that of explicit human speech acts, but argues that his approach enables us to grasp the distinctive features of human communication. But why ground communicative ethics in this limited way by focussing exclusively on the "differential imperative"? As Anthony Giddens has argued, "the division we make with between nature and culture is one that dissolves the intimacy with nature that is one of the richest forms of human experience."[77] Moreover, as Whitebook observes:

> The dignity and rights of the moral and legal subject have been secured by severing the subject from the realm of natural existence. Because they are characterized by self-consciousness or language, subjects are considered qualitatively different from the rest of natural existence. This is why they command respect and ought to be treated as ends-in-themselves. It is often feared that anything that threatens to disturb this distinction - which the concept of nature as an end-in-itself certainly does - also threatens the dignity of the subject.[78]

As we saw in Chapter 2, there are many other plausible ways of grounding ethics that recognize the dignity of both human and nonhuman beings. We need to revise and extend Habermas's communication ethic to a fully blown ecocentric ethic that is informed by not only the internal relatedness and reciprocity embedded in human speech, but also the internal relatedness and reciprocity embedded in ecological

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76. Ibid., p. 248.

77. Giddens, "Reason Without Revolution?" p. 119.

78. Joel Whitebook, "The Problem of Nature in Habermas," p. 53.

relations in general, which, in a very literal sense, sustain us all. The fact that the nonhuman world cannot participate in human speech should be no barrier to their special interests always being considered and respected by those who can participate in the dialogue. Indeed, as Animal Liberation theorists are quick to point out, not everyone within the human community is able to participate in the rational speech community (e.g., the very young, the mentally ill, and the senile) although their interests are generally considered by those who do. It is not necessary to be a rational, speaking moral agent in order to be a morally considerable subject, as Habermas presumes.[79]

Habermas goes on to point to the difficulties involved in delineating where the circle of supposed sympathetic solidarity with nature might end on the "lower" rungs of life (animals, plants?). In any event, he sees such solidarity as likely to conflict with what he describes as "the firmer imperatives of the self-preservation of the human race."[80] These are, of course, central questions in any attempt to widen the notion of the ethical community beyond the human realm, yet the challenging novelty of these questions is not a satisfactory justification for falling back on an anthropocentric ethics. Habermas seems unaware of the growing field of environmental philosophy that now offers a range of nonanthropocentric ethical positions, from Singer's utilitarian Animal Liberation ethics to ecocentric approaches such as autopoietic intrinsic value theory and transpersonal ecology. As we saw in Chapter 2, these approaches provide rationally justifiable criteria in cases of conflict or, alternatively, a general disposition with which to approach such conflict (in the case of transpersonal ecology).

Finally, Habermas wonders how an ecocentric ethic might be grounded other than through reliance on what he considers must be outmoded religious or

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79. On the moral considerability of animals, see, for example, Peter Singer, Animal Liberation (New York: Avon Books, 1975); on the moral considerability of plants and "natural objects," see, for example, Christopher D. Stone, Should Trees Have Standing?: Toward Legal Rights for Natural Objects (Los Altos, California: Kaufmann, 1974).

80. Habermas, "A Reply to My Critics," p. 248.

metaphysical world-views. If it is to have validity in Habermas's eyes, the extended ethic must "be grounded at the level of learning attained in the modern understanding of the world."[81] These problems lead Habermas to conclude that such an extended ethic is incapable of "being worked up cognitively, that is, [as] problems that could be stylized to questions of justice from the standpoint of normative validity."[82] Again, Habermas demonstrates his lack of familiarity with new developments in environmental philosophy, particularly the discussion concerning the "cross-disciplinary parallels" between an ecocentric world-view and the picture of reality offered by new developments in modern physics and biology.[83] As Martha Herbert shows, Habermas uses a hyper-reductionist interpretation of biological evolution as a foil for his more sophisticated model of social and cognitive evolution. In so doing, he "uncritically accepts neo-positivism's self-understanding and is content to hand over the material realm in toto to the positivists."[84] As we saw in Chapter 2, the ecocentric world-view (which is informed by an ecological model of internal relations) is more consistent with the findings of modern science and therefore more "grounded at the level of learning attained in the modern understanding of the world" than the anthropocentric world-view upon which most contemporary social and political theory (Habermas's included) rests.

Habermas's reluctance to seriously entertain a nonanthropocentric ethic may be traced to his basic commitment to the Enlightenment view of progress and autonomy. The disenchantment of the world ushered in by the Enlightenment represents, in Habermas's eyes, a positive cognitive development of the species, a

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81. Ibid.

82. Ibid., pp. 248-49.

83. See Warwick Fox, "Deep Ecology: A New Philosophy of Our Time?" The Ecologist 14 (1984): 194-200 at p. 196 and following. See also Callicott, "Intrinsic Value, Quantum Theory, and Environmental Ethics," Environmental Ethics 7 (1985): 257-75; Charles Birch and John B. Cobb, Jr., The Liberation of Life: From the Cell to the Community (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); and Fritjof Capra, The Turning Point: Science, Society and the Rising Culture (London: Fontana, 1983).

84. Martha Herbert, "Evolutionary Theory in Ferment," Telos 57 (1983): 107-28 at p. 123.

kind of intellectual maturing. He is therefore sceptical of any approach that seeks to make a radical break with the differentiated structures of modern consciousness (e.g., science, morality, art) by conceptualizing a more unified human/nonhuman relationship. Such approaches are seen as regressive, as trying to "reach behind" the level of learning attained in the modern age. For Habermas, the re-establishment of the "unity of reason" would sacrifice "successful" theory formation, which is another way of saying that it would involve a diminution of our technological capabilities. According to Habermas, history has been a valuable and progressive learning process for humans and we discard at our peril the different branches of knowledge that we have acquired.

Ecocentric theorists do not, however, seek the kind of "unity of reason" rejected by Habermas. Nor do they seek to discard the different branches of knowledge that we have acquired and "reach behind" the level of learning attained in the modern age. Rather, they seek to further advance our modern knowledge and understanding by seeking ways in which it might become more integrated through greater interdisciplinary study. Habermas has himself made an important contribution to interdisciplinary study of this kind. My main contention here, however, is that his sophisticated model of social and cognitive evolution is undermined by his hyper-reductionist interpretation of physical and biological evolution (as Martha Herbert has shown). And, as I have pointed out above, it is precisely these latter branches of inquiry that have provided the most pointed challenge to our anthropocentric assumptions.[85]

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85. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the complex relationship between ecocentrism, modernism, postmodernism, and Habermas's social and political theory. Suffice to say that although ecocentric theorists share the postmodernist's critique of the anthropocentric and dualistic categories of the Enlightenment and its confidence in the power of human reason to master nature, they nonetheless share Habermas's concern to rescue the emancipatory impulse of the Enlightenment. However, ecocentric theorists differ from Habermas not only in the ways in which they reformulate Enlightenment ideals such as "autonomy" and "self-realization" but also in their elaboration of the conditions that will enable the proper realization of these ideals. Far from being "incredulous towards metanarratives," to adapt Lyotard's pithy formulation of postmodernism, and sounding the end of philosophy, then, ecocentric theorists are attempting to revitalize philosophy by offering a more integrated, nonanthropocentric theoretical approach as an alternative to Habermas' more differentiated, anthropocentric theoretical approach (Lyotard's formulation of

Habermas's project, then, has been to iron out distortions in the Enlightenment project in order to perfect that project, namely, the pursuit of rational autonomy via the overcoming of all natural and social constraints on human thought and action. Ecocentric emancipatory theorists, on the other hand, are concerned to revise this project in a fundamental way. The Enlightenment notion of rational autonomy - particularly the quest to overcome all natural constraints - is seen as fundamentally illusory since it denies the fact of humanity's embeddedness in nature. Accordingly, ecocentric theorists are concerned, among other things, to emphasize our continuity with and relatedness to the nonhuman world rather than our separation and differentiation from it, and to cultivate an orientation that recognizes that "the development and fulfilment of the part can only proceed from its complex interrelationship and unfolding within the larger whole."[86] Such an orientation should imbue all of human activity - not only art, play, and contemplation but also work, science, and technology. As Vincent Di Norcia argues, the split in Critical Theory can only be resolved by the development of "a more ecological, fraternal but still rational conception of the science and technics of nature."[87]

A New Science?

The outstanding question, however, is whether such a new science is possible. As we have seen, Habermas's response to this question is to argue (contra Marcuse) that science and technology are merely neutral tools that can be made to serve good and bad ends and that all that is needed is a rationalization of the sphere of

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postmodernism is from Jean-Francois Lyotard, The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge, trans. by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984], p. xxiv). In this respect, many postmodernists would be critical of ecocentric theorists for attempting to construct a metanarrative in the form of a new ecological world-view. For their part, however, most ecocentric theorists would be sympathetic with Habermas's critique of postmodernism as "neo-conservative" and nihilistic on the grounds that it abandons a theoretical stand-point, abandons constructive normative debate, and abandons the idea of "the better argument." (See Richard Rorty, "Habermas and Lyotard on Postmodernity," in Habermas and Modernity, pp. 161-75.)

86. John Clark, The Anarchist Moment: Reflections on Culture, Nature and Power (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1984), p. 28.

87. Di Norcia, "From Critical Theory to Critical Ecology," pp. 90 and 89.

communication so that science and technology can be made to serve rationally justified ends. The problem with this argument is that it is only partially correct. This is because the dialectic between science and society is more complex and interwoven than even Habermas has allowed (notwithstanding his pioneering critique of scientism). Indeed, I argue that the debate between Habermas and Marcuse has been overdrawn in that both are correct in the terms in which they address the problem, but that these terms are unnecessarily limited. For example, Habermas is right to point to the existence of human interests lying behind different forms of theoretical inquiry. Where he is wrong is in his insistence that only one very limited and anthropocentric kind of interest lies behind our scientific and technological endeavours. It is possible to find different kinds of interests determining different kinds of inquiry within the same branch of science. This is particularly evident within the science of ecology. In his examination of the history of ecological ideas, for example, Donald Worster has identified two main streams of ecological thought - the Imperialist and the Arcadian - that are distinguishable by their competing human interests in, or orientations toward, the nonhuman world.[88] The former is motivated by an interest in increasing humanity's power to predict, manipulate, and control the natural order whereas the latter proceeds from a more reverential and symbiotic perspective, drawing meaning and understanding from the study of the natural order. (Indeed, Worster has likened the distinction between Imperialist and Arcadian ecology to Adorno and Horkheimer's distinction between instrumental and critical reason.[89]) Unlike Habermas, who would insist that ecologists can only "know" their subjects (e.g., ecosystems, populations) insofar as they can predict, manipulate, and control them, Worster is arguing that many ecologists approach their subject of study in the manner of a partner in communication. Science, Worster reminds us, is as divided as the rest of

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88. Donald Worster, Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

89. In the preface to the second edition of Nature's Economy Worster writes: "One of my chief regrets, in looking back over my own book, is that I failed to make explicit and sustained use of their [i.e., Horkheimer and Adorno's] insights, though my argument throughout is pervaded by a similar analysis" (pp. x-xi).

the Western civilization in terms of its orientation toward the nonhuman world. This poses a challenge to Habermas's rigid delineation of the technical and communication spheres, according to which "Imperialist" ecological science would be considered the only "true" or "efficacious" ecological science.

Alford has argued that Habermas's abstract treatment of the idea of science (shared also by Marcuse) is the legacy of Horkheimer and Adorno's Dialectic of Enlightenment, which saw science as "that fragment of reason concerned with human self-assertion."[90] Habermas continues this tradition by positing a direct and simplistic connection between science and technology, assuming that the role of pure science or "basic research" is always ultimately concerned to produce technically exploitable knowledge. Yet this is a very limited conception of science that ignores the role played by science in providing meaning - especially in shaping our understanding of our place in the cosmos. As Fox argues, modern science has both an instrumental aspect and a cosmological aspect. The latter provides us with "an account of creation that is the equal of any mythological, religious, or speculative philosophical account in terms of scale, grandeur, and richness of detail."[91] Moreover, we saw in Chapter 2 that modern science has served to undermine anthropocentric assumptions by showing that humans are part of a seamless web of interrelationships, that there are no radical divides between the human and the nonhuman. We also saw how some of the most vigorous challenges to the notion of a detached scientific observer standing above and apart from the object of study have come from within science itself (e.g., in quantum mechanics and ecology).

At least Marcuse, for all his vagueness and contradictory statements concerning the issue of a new science (and despite his ultimate anthropocentrism), had a greater appreciation than Habermas of the historical relativity of human

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90. Alford, Science and the Revenge of Nature, pp. 9-10. But Horkheimer and Adorno have also argued that "Science is not conscious of itself; it is only a tool. Enlightenment, however, is the philosophy which equates the truth with scientific systematization." (Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 85)

91. Warwick Fox, Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism (Boston: Shambhala, 1990), forthcoming, p. 403 (page citations refer to the prepublication ms).

knowledge and the mutual interplay between different kinds of knowledge and different kinds of human interests. For example, just as science can shape the kinds of technologies we develop, it is also shaped by those very technologies (e.g., computers have enabled the development of chaos theory although they were not built for that purpose).[92] Similarly, just as science can be influenced by broad cultural paradigms, it can also help to change those very paradigms. As Di Norcia argues, "it is a half-truth to say that technologies are just utilitarian projections of bodily functions; they are also symbolic forms of self expression and objects of self-inquiry."[93] A guided missile and a classical record embody vastly different forms of human self-expression.

Science, then, has two aspects. It helps us to survive and prosper in the world by providing us with technically exploitable knowledge (the technical aspect) and it provides us with meaning concerning our place in the scheme of things (the cosmological aspect). These two aspects of science are closely interrelated in that technical advances can enhance understanding and meaning just as new areas of cosmological inquiry can give rise to unintended technological spin-offs. Both kinds of scientific endeavour employ empirical-analytic modes of inquiry, but it is a mistake to assume, as Habermas does, that such inquiry is insulated from broad cultural paradigms. Rather, empirical-analytic inquiry is a modern (and very powerful) human construct, the result of intersubjective agreement by successive communities of scientific scholars working within, as Marcuse notes, the horizons of an industrializing world.

It is also a mistake to assume, as Habermas does, that those who employ empirical-analytic modes of inquiry must necessarily approach the subject matter of their inquiry as inert, manipulable matter. As Andrew McLaughlin notes, it is one thing to find "reward in acting on the world instrumentally" but it is another thing to

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92. For a general discussion of how technology determines science see Patsy Hallen, "What is Philosophy of Technology? An Introduction," The Trumpeter 5 (1988): 142-44.

93. Di Norcia, "From Critical Theory to Critical Ecology," p. 90.

"mis-take the world revealed under that interest as the world. This is the epistemic error."[94] Now Habermas might acknowledge that not all scientists make this error in practice but point out that his technical cognitive interest is simply an analytical distinction. Yet Habermas invests this distinction with a "quasi-transcendental" status. In so doing, he reduces science to its technical aspect. This reduction leaves him unable to entertain the idea that the scientific community may proceed on the basis of an interest in nature that is not one of instrumental control and an image of nature that is not one of inert, manipulable matter.

It is surely not incongruous to suggest that a different and better science might result from a community of scientists who employ empirical-analytic modes of inquiry but who proceed on the basis of an ecocentric "interest" in nature. Such an interest would not only influence the types of problems and questions examined by such scientists but also the way they go about their science, such as the types of theories they choose (given that theories are generally "underdetermined by the facts"), the types of "facts" they choose (given that sensory experience is underdetermined by sensory input), and the types of experiments and techniques they develop to test such theories.[95] As Evelyn Fox Keller has argued, scientists who have a "feeling for the organism," that is, approach their subject in a spirit of attentiveness, humility, and respect for the uniqueness of what is studied can still produce reliable and sharable scientific knowledge about the natural order.[96] For ecocentric scientists, then, the test of "good" science (in its technical aspect) would not simply be that it "works" in the sense of enabling humans to exploit the world around them more efficiently but rather that it "works" in the sense of enabling humans to live in ways that preserve the health, safety, and well-being of both the

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94. Andrew McLaughlin, "Images and Ethics of Nature," Environmental Ethics 7 (1985): 293-319 at p. 302.

95. See Mary Hesse, Revolutions and Reconstructions in the Philosophy of Science (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980), p. 187, and McLaughlin, "Images and Ethics of Nature," p. 295.

96. Evelyn Fox Keller, A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock (New York: Freeman, 1983), and Reflections on Gender and Science (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

human and nonhuman community. Far from being a mere "neutral" handmaiden of the polity, science itself might then become a further form of resistance to ecological degradation and the "colonization of the life-world."

Alford has described the different categories of knowledge identified by Habermas as the cognitive categories of a disenchanted consciousness that act as an impediment to the growth of radically new categories of knowledge. Indeed, they serve to freeze the growth of knowledge and downplay "the creative freedom with which man constructs his philosophy and science. [They] seek in some measure to fix in advance the categories of what man makes: the intellectual artifacts of culture."[97] I have sought to show that Habermas's rigid delineation of the technical and communicative spheres leads to the excessive insulation of the former vis-a-vis the latter, overlooking crucial aspects of the dialectical relationship between science, technology, and society. Although Habermas's professed goal is to subordinate instrumental reason to practical reason, his conflation of the scientific mode of inquiry with the project of science as a whole has led him ultimately to reinforce rather than challenge the domination of the nonhuman world.

Conclusion

My principal objection to Habermas's social and political theory has been that it is thoroughly human-centred in insisting "that the emancipation of human relations need not require or depend upon the emancipation of nature."[98] While Habermas has moved beyond the pessimism and utopianism of the first generation of Critical Theorists by providing the theoretical foundations for his practical and emancipatory cognitive interests, he has, as Whitebook points out, also "markedly altered the spirit of their project."[99] Yet it is precisely the "spirit" of the early Frankfurt School theorists (i.e., their critique of the dominant "imperialist" orientation toward the world, rather than their critique of a simplistically conceived idea of

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97. Alford, Science and the Revenge of Nature, p. 8.

98. Ibid., p. 140.

99. Whitebook, "The Problem of Nature in Habermas," p. 41.

science) and their desire for the liberation of nature, that is most relevant to the ecocentric perspective. Despite Habermas's many theoretical innovations and departures from Marxism, then, ultimately he has strayed very little from the structure of the basic Marxist response to the environmental crisis presented in Chapter 4 (whether orthodox or humanist), which is to revolutionize social relations (rather than revolutionize our instrumental relationship to the nonhuman world) so that the forces of production can then be rationally controlled by society as a whole.

Moreover, even within the human realm, Habermas is mainly preoccupied with the formal as distinct from the substantive ground rules for human emancipation. As Joel Whitebook has put it, "Habermas sees the discursive adjudication of validity claims for public issues exhausting the concept of emancipation."[100] To be sure, modern Critical Theory clearly holds out the promise of cultural and ecological renewal by providing the space for the expansion of the moral and aesthetic spheres vis-a-vis the technical sphere. (I say "promise" since Habermas himself, unlike Dryzek, and Luke and White, pays very little attention to the types of concrete institutions that might facilitate an ideal speech situation and the harmonious balancing of system-steering mechanisms and the life-world.[101]) Ecocentric theorists would agree that the discursive processes central to communicative rationalization are indeed conducive to protecting generalizable human interests (especially in smaller scale communities) and generating "cooperative" solutions to the environmental crisis that avoid the familiar "tragedy of the commons" scenario. Such processes are also more likely to produce just solutions to the many social pathologies of modernity, ranging from crime and urban decay to poverty and unemployment. As Luke and White argue, Habermas's communicative ethics will enable the "deconstruction of managed meanings" by the corporate capitalist and

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100. Whitebook, "Saving the Subject," p. 98. Whitebook also observes that "whereas the counter-Enlightenment evaluates history in terms of meaning and sees only regression, Habermas judges it in terms of formal validity and sees only progress."

101. See David Held, "Crisis Tendencies, Legitimation and the State," in Habermas: Critical Debates, eds. John B. Thompson and David Held, pp. 181-95 at p. 187.

bureaucratic state apparatus that "will help open the way for rethinking what autonomy in everyday life can mean for average producers and citizens in an informational age."[102]

But this communicatively rationalized social democracy is merely a necessary as distinct from a sufficient condition for emancipation writ large. Although one of Habermas's professed goals is to redeem the promise of the classical concept of politics by reviving the inquiry into the "good life" and restoring the art of phronesis, or practical reason, his approach has been essentially procedural rather than substantive. That is, he has failed to revive the classical tradition's pedagogical concern for the cultivation of a range of specific virtues in its citizenry (i.e., in addition to the civic virtue of democratic participation).[103]

Ecocentric emancipatory theorists, on the other hand, have more in common with the classical tradition insofar as they are concerned to cultivate what might be called general "ecocentric virtues" (such as humility, compassion, knowledge of the local bioregion, and respect for the integrity and diversity of other life-forms) in addition to the civic virtue of participation. As we have seen in Chapter 1, the ecological crisis has been identified not simply as a crisis of participation or survival but also as a crisis of culture and character. To these theorists, a radical reconception of our place in the rest of nature is not only essential for solving our planetary problems, it would also offer a surer path for human self-development. It is in this context that primary ecopolitical questions concerning legitimate human needs and appropriate technologies and lifestyles are to be debated. Without the injection of substantive and constructive debate at the level of world-views, Habermas's democratic political theory holds no guarantee that ecological reforms would ensue for the benefit of humankind (let alone the nonhuman world). In the following chapter, we shall see whether the third, largely post-Marxist family of ecologically

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102. Luke and White, "Critical Theory, the Informational Revolution, and an Ecological Path to Modernity," 49.

103. Jurgen Habermas, "The Classical Doctrine of Politics in relation to Social Philosophy." Cf. John Rodman's discussion of the new ecological virtues of limits, community, and diversity in "Paradigm Change in Political Science," American Behavioral Scientist 24 (1980): 49-78 at pp. 67-74.

informed socialism has succeeded in moving beyond the limited ecological horizons of the Marxist and neo-Marxist contributions to emancipatory ecopolitical thought.

Chapter 6

Democratic Ecosocialism: The Post-Marxist Synthesis

Introduction

The late Raymond Williams once described the ecology movement as "the strongest organized hesitation before socialism."[1] Democratic ecosocialism - a position Williams himself defended increasingly in his later writings - represents a concerted attempt to revise and reformulate the democratic socialist case in the light of this hesitation or challenge presented by the ecology movement. Democratic ecosocialists have also used this opportunity for theoretical stock-taking to respond to other significant challenges before socialism - challenges that form part of, but are not unique to, the ecological critique - in an effort to address the concerns of new social movements and recapture the "high ground" of emancipatory ecopolitical discourse. As Frieder Otto Wolf has put it, "a socialism without qualification will never again be able to become a hegemonic force within emancipatory mass movements."[2] The three most significant of these other challenges have been (i) the historical legacies of bureaucratization, centralization, and authoritarianism; (ii) the problematic role of the working class as the agents of revolutionary change; and (iii) disillusionment with the traditional socialist "productivist" response to the indignities of poverty, which has usually been to augment the economic power of the state, seek a better mastery of nature through modern scientific techniques, and step up production. As Williams points out in relation to this last problem, history has shown that the traditional socialist response of increasing production has not alleviated poverty for the vast mass of humankind. Williams also argues that democratic socialists must now resist the pull of centralization and re-assert the principle of self-management and

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1. Raymond Williams, "Hesitations Before Socialism," New Socialist, September 1986, pp. 34-36 at pp. 35-36.

2. Frieder Otto Wolf, "Eco-Socialist Transition on the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century," New Left Review 158 (1986): 32-42 at p. 35.

production for human need. According to Williams, "this is now our crisis: that we have to find ways of self-managing not just a single enterprise or community but a society."[3]

The democratic ecosocialist theory presented in this chapter has emerged from a critical dialogue by democratic socialists with Marxist orthodoxy and Western social democratic thought, on the one hand, and the radical environmental movement, on the other. The result is that democratic ecosocialist theory is largely a post-Marxist theory that stands somewhat "betwixt and between" humanist eco-Marxism and the non-Marxist emancipatory ecopolitical perspectives of ecoanarchism and ecofeminism.[4] I use the term "post-Marxist" here in the sense defined by Carl Boggs as

> ... a critical, dialectical framework that contains a philosophy of praxis that is no longer wedded to the canons of scientific materialism or to the primacy of objective historical forces; a social theory that confronts the reality of multiple and overlapping forms of domination (class, bureaucratic, patriarchal, racial) without reducing that reality to one of its aspects: and a democratic political theory compatible with the ideal of nonbureaucratic, self-managed society.[5]

As I explained in the introduction to Part II, democratic ecosocialism and humanist eco-Marxism (including Critical Theory) remain close theoretical cousins having more in common with each other than with orthodox Marxism. Indeed, many of the democratic ecosocialist ideas presented in this chapter may be seen as representing the cumulative wisdom of ecosocialist thought to date.

The first part of this chapter will provide a discussion of the influence of democratic ecosocialism on Green politics, an outline of the democratic ecosocialist analysis of the ecological crisis, and a presentation of the central features of the ecosocialist programme of social and political change. These sections are mainly

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3. Williams, "Hesitations Before Socialism," p. 34.

4. This is so notwithstanding the important contribution of Andre Gorz, who I regard as more neo- than post-Marxist.

5. Carl Boggs, Social Movements and Political Power: Emerging Forms of Radicalism in the West (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), pp. 16-17. Unlike some post-Marxist and postmodern theorists, who deconstruct managed meanings to the point of radical pluralism, democratic ecosocialists retain a normative commitment to the egalitarian project of the Enlightenment. See Boris Frankel, "Beyond Abstract Environmentalism," Island Magazine, Autumn 1989, pp. 22-25.

expository and are concerned to draw together the key ideas in the democratic ecosocialist literature while noting difference nuances and areas of controversy within democratic ecosocialism. I then move on to a more critical discussion of the ecological perspective of democratic ecosocialism and point out the various ways in which it falls short of the ecocentric perspective defended in this inquiry. This is followed by a philosophical discussion of some of the historical sources that have helped to shape the anthropocentric foundations of socialism. After a brief recapitulation on the ecocentric critique of ecosocialism in general and a discussion of the possibility of theoretical "bridge building" between ecocentrism and the varieties of ecosocialism identified in this inquiry, I conclude that democratic ecosocialism is the only family of ecosocialism that has the potential to evolve in an ecocentric direction.

The Influence of Democratic Ecosocialism

The growing influence of ecosocialist ideas within the Green movement, most notably in Europe, has rendered the popular Green slogan "neither left nor right" increasingly problematic.[6] That is, while this slogan originally served to publicize the Green movement's efforts to find a distinct, third alternative to the growth consensus of capitalism and "actually existing socialism" it has since served to generate a lively and sometimes acrimonious debate within the Green movement concerning the proper political characterization of Green politics. Democratic ecosocialists argue that the left (rather than the right) is the natural ally of the Greens and that only a new ecosocialism can provide a feasible, third alternative to capitalism and "actually existing socialism."[7] In particular, democratic ecosocialists have mounted a challenge to the presumed left-right ideological neutrality of Green politics

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6. Commenting on the nature of ecopolitical debate in the United States, Daniel Faber and James O'Connor have observed that while Barry Commoner "has raised the issue of socialism, only in a few isolated circles has socialism been a central topic either philosophically or strategically." See Daniel Faber and James O'Connor, "The Struggle for Nature: Environmental Crisis and the Crisis of Environmentalism in the United States," Capitalism, Nature, Socialism 2 (1989): 12-39 at p. 33.

7. Martin Ryle, Ecology and Socialism (London: Century Hutchinson, 1988), p. 91.

by pointing out the various egalitarian and redistributional (and hence "leftist") measures that are needed to ensure an equitable transition toward a conserver society.[8] Indeed, many such measures - such as the redistribution of resources from developed to developing countries, the sharing of work, and the implementation of a guaranteed minimum income scheme - are already included in most Green party platforms.[9] With respect to these kinds of issues, Green political aspirations can indeed be fairly described as "more left than right."

There are many points of convergence between the democratic socialist critique of capitalist modernity and the radical ecology movement's critique of industrialism that point toward the possibility of a synthesis of socialism and ecology.[10] Indeed, it is this convergence that has prompted the development of democratic ecosocialist theory. Democratic ecosocialists generally regard the ecological critique as strengthening the socialist critique of private and state capitalism, thereby giving socialism new vigour and relevance vis-a-vis the concerns of the Green movement. These arguments have had an important influence on Green Parties in Europe, especially Die Grunen (whose political platform has served as a model for many newly formed Green parties elsewhere). In particular, John Ely has argued that it has been ecosocialism (particularly that of Rainer Trampert and Thomas Ebermann) rather than the "ecocommunalism" of Rudolf Bahro that has had the greater influence in shaping the party programme of the West German Greens.[11] According to Ely,

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8. The slogan "neither left not right" was coined by the West German C.D.U. dissident Herbert Gruhl, who failed to gain any support for his anti-socialist platform in the critical debates that led up to Die Grunen's formation. Gruhl's subsequent attempt to found an alternative Ecological Democratic Party has been described as "a complete failure." See Werner Hulsberg, The German Greens: A Social and Political Profile, trans. Gus Fagan (London: Verso, 1988), p. 96.

9. See, for example, Die Grunen, Programme of the German Green Party (London: Heretic Books, 1983).

10. For a general discussion, see Stephen Bell, "Socialism and Ecology: Will Ever the Twain Meet?" Social Alternatives 6 (1987): 5-12.

11. Formerly older members of the West German (mostly Maoist) radical left, Rainer Trampert and Thomas Ebermann are now both key figures in the West German Green party. According to Ely, their book The Future of the Greens represents a new

> ... though Bahro's intellectual and practical contributions have international importance and his interventions were crucial in the formation of the Greens, his path from "red" to "green" is not particularly indicative of general trends, precisely because of his unique experience. Trampert and Ebermann's Future of the Greens, however, expresses a general tendency.[12]

Similarly, Werner Hulsberg has concluded in his comprehensive profile of the West German Greens that the real contribution of the Greens is that they have grasped the ecology crisis as "the decisive question, the acid test of left-wing politics."[13] However, he also points out that Die Grunen

> ... is a party to the left of the SPD but without any direct relationship with the labour movement or scientific socialism. Under those circumstances, the Greens are the organizers of opposition not only to bourgeois society but also to social democracy.[14]

Notwithstanding democratic ecosocialism's challenge to both orthodox Marxism and Western social democracy, however, I intend to show that democratic ecosocialism has not made any serious inroads into the deeply embedded, anthropocentric assumptions of socialist thought.[15] Since I have earlier referred to socialism as "a mansion with many rooms," the case I propose to argue may be foreshadowed by way of an analogy with a building, with socialism representing the original building and ecosocialism representing renovations and extensions to that building. I will be arguing that the building upon which these extensions have been fashioned rests on foundations that are too narrow (i.e., anthropocentric). However,

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theoretical turn toward a no compromise, fundamentalist ecosocialism that is at odds with those pragmatic socialist factions (particularly that represented by Joschka Fischer) within the Greens who are prepared to enter into alliances with the S.P.D.. Ely also argues that their contribution "represents the first attempt to come to terms with Marxist pasts." John Ely, unpublished review essay of Thomas Ebermann and Rainer Trampert, Die Zukunft der Grunen [The Future of the Greens] (Hamburg: Konkret Verlag, 1984), 1988, ms., p. 13.

12. Ibid., p. 11.

13. Hulsberg, The German Greens, pp. 219-20.

14. Ibid., p. 138.

15. A reminder regarding terminology might be useful at this point. As I explained in my introduction to Part II, democratic socialists are much more zealous in their critique of capitalism than social democrats. Whereas social democrats merely seek to reform (in the sense of ameliorate the effects of) capitalism, democratic socialists seek to re-organize capitalism along more democratic and participatory lines. Democratic ecosocialists differ from conventional democratic socialists in their recognition of "ecological constraints" and their concern to bring resource consumption down to a level that is compatible with global justice.

since many of these theoretical renovations and extensions are skilfully crafted and, I would argue, defensible on social and ecological grounds, they should be incorporated into the design of a new building that rests on broader, ecocentric foundations. Before addressing the central question of foundations, however, it will be useful to begin with a general outline of the democratic ecosocialist analysis of the ecological crisis and the kinds of theoretical renovations and extensions to the socialist mansion that have been proposed.

The Ecosocialist Analysis of the Ecological Crisis

Democratic ecosocialists are unanimous in arguing that it is the competitive and expansionary dynamics of the capitalist system that are largely responsible for the ecology crisis. As early as 1973 Raymond Williams had argued that modern environmentalists miss their mark when they target the state and its development control agencies as their essential enemy, rather than looking to the economic system per se.[16] More recently, Joe Weston has argued that it is the accumulation of wealth and its concentration into fewer and fewer hands that is the main cause of both poverty and ecological degradation.[17] He goes on to argue that "it is time the greens accepted that it is capitalism rather than industrialism per se which is at the heart of the problems they address" - Weston, like most democratic ecosocialists, regards Soviet Russia as practicing "state capitalism" rather than socialism.[18] Not

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16. Raymond Williams, The Country and the City (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973), pp. 294 and 301. According to Robin Blackburn, The Country and the City was Raymond Williams' first major excursion into ecological issues, an excursion that "prepared the ground for a thoroughgoing ecological critique of capitalism, and of 'productivist' distortions of socialism." See Robin Blackburn, "Raymond Williams and the Politics of the New Left," New Left Review 168 (1988): 12-22 at p. 17.

17. Joe Weston, "Introduction," in Red and Green: The New Politics of the Environment, ed. Joe Weston (London: Pluto Press, 1986), pp. 4-5. Similarly, David Pepper is critical of what he calls "new paradigm" Greens for focussing on ecologically degrading methods of production rather than on "who owns and shapes it" and "the social relations that stem from it." See David Pepper, "Radical Environmentalism and the Labour Movement," in Red and Green, pp. 115-39 at p. 117.

18. Joe Weston, "Introduction," p. 5.

surprisingly, democratic ecosocialists are critical of nonsocialist Greens for neglecting class politics and failing to develop "an analysis of power" in their "new ecological paradigm." Such an analysis is considered by democratic ecosocialists to be essential if a fundamental opposition to the present means of production, distribution, and exchange is to be mounted.[19]

For his part, Gorz has argued that although an ecological perspective is incompatible with both the rationality of capitalism and authoritarian socialism, it "is not, by contrast, incompatible with a libertarian or democratic socialism: but it should not be confused with it."[20] Indeed, most democratic ecosocialists regard the ecology crisis as but one, albeit increasingly significant, item in a much broader agenda. As Gorz puts it: "the ecological movement is not an end in itself, but a larger stage in the larger struggle [i.e., to overcome capitalism]."[21]

While democratic ecosocialists share the basic Marxist diagnosis of the environmental crisis, they depart considerably from the Marxist prescription for social and ecological renewal. As Gorz explains, "Marxism, although irreplaceable as an instrument of analysis, has lost its prophetic value."[22] The real challenge facing democratic ecosocialists, as we shall see, is how to develop new, democratic, and noncentralist social institutions that are able to give expression to democratic socialist values such as self-management, producer democracy, and the protection of civil and political liberties. On these questions, Marx is singularly unhelpful since he repudiated bourgeois parliamentary politics but did not address the institutional mechanisms that would guarantee the communist utopia that he envisaged (apart from

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19. David Pepper, "Radical Environmentalism," p. 116.

20. Andre Gorz, Ecology as Politics, trans. Patsy Vigderman and Jonathan Cloud (London: Pluto Press, 1980), p. 18.

21. Ibid., p. 3. Examples of democratic ecosocialist theorists who conduct a similar analysis include Boris Frankel, The Post-industrial Utopians (London: Polity Press, 1987); Frankel, "Beyond Abstract Environmentalism," pp. 22-25; Bell, "Socialism and Ecology"; John Wiseman, "Red or Green? The German Ecological Movement," Arena 68 (1984): 38-56; and Richard Worthington, "Socialism and Ecology: An Overview," New Political Science 13 (1984): 69-83.

22. Gorz, Ecology as Politics, p. 11.

the interim dictatorship of the proletariat); indeed, he naively envisaged an end to politics in a communist society.

Democratic ecosocialists, however, recognize an inextricable connection between economic freedom and political freedom and are reluctant to leave major economic decisions to either capitalists or state officials. Yet the problem of developing feasible alternatives is especially difficult given that most democratic socialists and democratic ecosocialists share the general conviction that there are some noncapitalist alternatives (namely the authoritarian central economic planning of Stalinism) that are demonstrably worse than the capitalist method of resource allocation in terms of the sacrifice to human freedom that is involved.[23] As I explained in the introduction to Part II, democratic ecosocialists are concerned to extend the democratic project and carry forward the substantial achievements of the liberal parliamentary democratic tradition. That is, they accept liberal political freedoms but argue that they are illusory without economic democracy and relative material equality. They are therefore concerned to reduce the dependency of the State on the market, and the personal dependency of welfare recipients on the State, by seeking ways of moving beyond the corporate welfare state of Western social democracy to a decentralized participatory democracy where producers and citizens have a more direct say in the organization of their work and community life. The basic democratic ecosocialist goal, then, is clear: to develop an allocative system that ensures ecologically benign production for genuine human need. To understand how this goal might be achieved, it is necessary to draw together the lessons democratic ecosocialists have learned from the failures of existing communist regimes and the revisions they have made to socialist theory in the light of the ecological challenge.

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23. See, for example, Wright, Socialisms, p. 125, and Raymond Williams, Towards 2000 (Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1983), p. 258.

(i) Farewell to Scientific Socialism and the

Economic Growth Consensus

Democratic ecosocialists accept that there are both ecological and social limits to growth and accordingly they reject the economic growth consensus of conservative, liberal, and social democratic parties in the West and communist parties in the East. According to Williams, the central ecological problem created by market capitalism and the economies of existing communist regimes is that there is "an effective infinity of expansion in a physically finite world."[24] In addition to their rejection of the indiscriminate commitment to mass manufacture and increased consumption, democratic ecosocialists also share the early Frankfurt School's rejection of "scientific socialism" as being unduly optimistic in believing in the unlimited power of scientific understanding, technical control, and the mastery of nature. In this respect, democratic ecosocialists wish to avoid replacing the compulsion of the market with bureaucratic domination on the ground that both capitalist and communist economies dominate both people and nonhuman nature. They are generally critical of large scale institutions and alienating, "inappropriate," or destructive technologies and advocate what Ryle has called "eco-contraction" or ecological restructuring (in Ryle's case, this entails, inter alia, the gradual dismantling of major ecologically destructive industries such as the automobile, chemical, and defence industries).[25]

Democratic ecosocialists, then, question both the capitalist relations of production and the capitalist forces of production. The orthodox Marxist prophecy that conventional socialist strategy had counted on - that the intensification of the contradictions of capitalism will finally be resolved by the industrial proletariat taking over the forces of production - will not, according to Gorz, end the ecological crisis or human alienation. This is because the expanded forces of production do not lend themselves to collective appropriation insofar as "there can never be effective self-management of a big factory, an industrial combine or a bureaucratic department. It

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24. Ibid., p. 214.

25. Ryle, Ecology and Socialism, p. 66.

will always be defeated by the rigidity of technical constraints."[26] In short, the appropriation of the capitalist forces of production would only result in a new ruling class taking over the machinery of domination.

In accepting the early Frankfurt School's critique of instrumental reason, democratic ecosocialism reveals, in varying degrees, a partial return to a pre-Marxist/romantic critique of industrialization. As Williams acknowledges, "Marx shared with his capitalist enemies an open triumphalism in the transformation of nature."[27] Indeed, modes of production that preceded the capitalist one were seen by Marx as "mere prehistory; almost in effect pre-human."[28] Whereas human interventions with nature under Marxism were always as Producer, William declares that under democratic ecosocialism our interventions must now proceed

> ... from a broader sense of human need and a closer sense of the physical world. The old orientation of raw material for production is rejected, and in its place there is the new orientation of livelihood: of practical, self-managing, self-renewing societies, in which people care first for each other, in a living world.[29]

This kind of general reorientation away from instrumental reason is fundamental according to Williams, "for it is the ways in which human beings have been seen as raw material, for schemes of profit or power, that have most radically to be changed."[30] As I show below, democratic ecosocialists have fully absorbed the arguments of the Human Welfare Ecology stream of modern environmentalism. However, as we saw in Chapter 2, although this stream is particularly critical of indiscriminate growth and the idea that science and technology alone can deliver us from the crisis, it has failed to transcend an anthropocentric framework. I shall return to this point below when discussing the role and meaning of ecology in democratic ecosocialist thought.

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26. Andre Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class: An Essay on Post-Industrial Socialism (London: Pluto Press, 1982), p. 100.

27. Williams, Towards 2000, p. 264.

28. Ibid., p. 265.

29. Ibid., p. 266.

30. Ibid., p. 262.

(ii) The Problematic Role of the Working Class

Democratic ecosocialist theorists recognize that the industrial working class has not only shrunk in relative size but also become increasingly conservative by virtue of its dependency on the industrial order. Indeed, most accept that the working class - whatever its history - is no longer the central agent of progressive social, cultural, and political change and concede that such change is more likely to emanate from a broad front of allied new social movements that operate outside the traditional labour movement and that are not easily defined by their class location. Andre Gorz, in particular, has argued that the industrial proletariat cannot become the revolutionary force heralded by Marx since it has turned into a mere replica of capital, exercising functional but not personal power. Indeed, in Farewell to the Working Class, Gorz anticipates that the traditional, skilled proletariat will become more disciplined, conservative, and privileged over time as increased automation reduces the number of jobs available to it. As a result there will be a swelling in the ranks of what Gorz has called the "nonclass" or "post-industrial neo-proletariat," a "class" that encompasses all those who have been expelled from manual and intellectual work as a result of automation and computerization as well as those who are marginally employed and who have no real class identity or job security.[31] Gorz extends this line of argument in Paths to Paradise where he maintains that increasing automation and the micro-electronic revolution are (i) reducing the quantity of labour required for most material production, and (ii) breaking down the direct contact between worker and matter. Full employment has become an unrealizable goal, yet Gorz argues that it is continually pursued as an ideological tool to "maintain the relations of domination based on the work ethic."[32] This leads inevitably to an increasing split in the active population between

> ... on the one hand, acting as a repository of industrialism's traditional values, an elite of permanent secure, full-time workers, attached to their work and their

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31. Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class, Chapter 6.

32. Andre Gorz, Paths to Paradise: On the Liberation from Work (London: Pluto Press, 1985), p. 35.

> social status; on the other, a mass of unemployed and precarious casual workers, without qualifications or status, performing menial tasks.[33]

This latter "nonclass" occupies a pivotal place in Gorz's analysis in that it is seen as the prefiguration of a different kind of convivial community - beyond economic rationality and external constraint - that constitutes a potentially emancipatory extension of an already developing process.[34] Indeed, Gorz's ultimate project is to abolish wage labour on the ground that there is no dignity to be had in the modern wage labour relationship. Instead he argues that true dignity and self-determination can only be found in autonomous spheres of production (i.e., in the neighbourhood rather than in the factory). Gorz thus severs the orthodox socialist equation between personal emancipation and the social appropriation and management of the forces of production.

However, Gorz's preoccupation with the nonclass has led him to ignore the political potential of the highly educated New Class, who, as we saw in Chapter 3, form the bulk of the active membership of new social movements. In this respect, Gorz's special focus on the emancipatory potential of the nonclass is not representative of democratic ecosocialist thought in general. Rather, as I noted above, most democratic ecosocialists see the potential for social change emanating from a much broader alliance of new social movements working together with the labour movement.[35] (As we saw in Chapter 3, new social movements tend to be supported by three main social groups or classes, namely, the New Class, decommodified groups [which roughly correspond to Gorz's "nonclass"], and disaffected members of the petty bourgeoisie.[36]) While democratic ecosocialists concede that the labour movement's "productivist ideology" has traditionally not recognized the experiences

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33. Ibid.

34. Farewell to the Working Class, p. 75.

35. See, for example, Ryle, Ecology and Socialism, p. 88; Williams, Towards 2000, pp. 254-55; and Boggs, Social Movements and Political Power, p. 19.

36. Claus Offe, "New Social Movements: Challenging the Boundaries of Institutional Politics," Social Research 52 (1985): 817-68 at p. 832-38. Offe does point out, however, that unlike the petty bourgeoisie, both the "New Class" and "decommodified groups" are more likely to grow in number than disappear (p. 837).

of other disadvantaged groups and classes (e.g., welfare recipients, women, and ethnic minorities) or environmental problems beyond the workplace, they nonetheless insist that effective and lasting change will not come about without the support of the union movement, indeed, the majority of "working people."[37]

However, building such an alliance between New Class radicals and the working class is no easy task. As Williams observes, the predominantly middle class membership of new social movements must confront the fact that the "effective majority" will remain committed to the dominant system so long as they have no practical alternative.[38] In particular, Williams points out that

> ... it is a consequence of the social order that, lacking the privileges of relative social distance and mobility, or of independent (often publicly funded) access to extended learning, the majority of employed people - a significantly wider population than the working-class in any of its definitions - have still primarily to relate to short-range and short-term determinations.[39]

Williams (unlike some ecosocialists), however, dismisses as absurd the claim that new social movements are elitist, or that their claims are in conflict with the interests of the working class. The reason why the demands of the New Class differ from those of the working class is primarily a matter of different social experience and different access to information. As Williams explains,

> ... the fact that many of the most important elements of the new movements and campaigns are radically dependent on access to independent information, typically though not exclusively through higher education, [means] ... that some of the most decisive facts cannot be generated from immediate experience but only from conscious analysis.[40]

In this respect, Williams rightly points out that unless the bearers of the "new politics" can generate "serious and detailed alternatives at these everyday points where a central consciousness is generated" (i.e., the local, practical, and immediate interactions of the "effective majority" of working people), then the issues raised by the new politics will remain marginalized.[41] Williams argues that an important task

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37. Ryle, Ecology and Socialism, pp. 31 and 94.

38. Williams, Towards 2000, p. 254.

39. Ibid., p. 255.

40. Ibid., p. 254-55.

for democratic ecosocialism, then, is a "critical engagement" with the labour movement in order to prepare the way for a broad Green/labour alliance that will represent the "general interest" as distinct from the interests of a particular class. Democratic ecosocialists divide, however, on the question as to whether to pursue this critical engagement through the established social democratic and labour parties, through the fledgling Green parties and the Green movement, or through a new grassroots rainbow movement (i.e., of the kind I characterized in Chapter 3).

As part of the move to widen the narrow, "productivist" focus of the traditional labour movement, democratic ecosocialists have also sought to expand the traditional democratic socialist preoccupation with class and producer democracy to include cultural renewal and the revitalization of civil society. This entails the promotion of new attitudes to work (such as job-sharing, reduction in the working week), health, lifestyle, and sexuality. However, unlike many ecoanarchists and ecofeminists, most democratic ecosocialists generally avoid any discussion of the need to develop a "new ecological paradigm" (ecocentric or otherwise), much less new forms of Western spirituality, and tend to adopt instead a secular approach that emphasizes the cultivation of public virtue or good citizenship rather than inner awakening.

(iii) The New Internationalism

In responding to the ecology crisis, democratic ecosocialists have sought to explore a broader range of contradictions than those based simply on class. For example, most share Rudolf Bahro's analysis that the "external" contradiction between humanity and the rest of nature and between "North" and "South" are more pressing than the "internal" contradictions between capital and labour within the developed countries of the First World.[42] The resolution of these contradictions is seen to

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41. Ibid.

42. Rudolf Bahro, Socialism and Survival (London: Heretic Books, 1982). Bahro's personal trajectory has moved from Marxism (The Alternative in Eastern Europe [London: New Left Books, 1978] to post-Marxist ecosocialism (From Red to Green [London: Verso, 1984] and Socialism and Survival) and finally to communal ecoanarchism (Building the Green Movement [London: Heretic/GMP, 1986]).

require a "new internationalism" that accepts that we cannot use the standard of living attained by the average family in the first world as a model to be pursued for all of humanity since this would put an intolerable ecological strain on the planet. Ecosocialists therefore argue that the transition toward a conserver society must begin in the "affluent society."[43] According to Williams, the deepest changes must come from the first world not only in the form of conservation and the production of more durable commodities "but also in their deep assumption that the rest of the world is an effectively vacant lot from which they extract raw materials."[44] Accordingly, democratic ecosocialists argue for the redistribution of wealth not only within nations but also internationally between the developed and developing countries in order to enable the mutual self-realization of all persons.[45] A cornerstone of this "new internationalism" is a redefinition of human needs that is global in scope. According to Ryle, ultimately, human needs have to be defined at a level that enables both present and future generations of humans to enjoy an equivalent measure of health and autonomy.[46] Ryle suggests that a priority in this exercise should be the establishment of an agreed set of basic needs (i.e., education, health care, energy, basic infrastructural requirements such as sewage and water supply, housing, and transport), so that steps can then be taken to ensure that everyone has these basic needs met in both rich and poor countries.[47] Unlike democratic socialists, however, democratic ecosocialists address social and economic deprivation by means other than expanding production. That is, they seek to meet unmet human needs in ecologically

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Socialism and Survival may thus be seen as part of Bahro's "middle period." His more recent ideas are discussed in Chapter 7.

43. See, for example, Erik Dammann, Revolution in the Affluent Society (London: Heretic Books, 1984); F. E. Trainer, Abandon Affluence! (London: Zed Books, 1985); also by Trainer, Developed to Death (London: Merlin, 1989); and Frankel, Post-industrial Utopians, pp. 261-62.

44. Williams, Towards 2000, p. 216. Williams also presents this centre/periphery analysis in The Country and the City.

45. Frankel, Post-industrial Utopians, pp. 261-63.

46. Ryle, Ecology and Socialism, p. 70.

47. Ibid., pp. 73-74.

benign and sustainable ways in order to bring overall resource consumption down to a level that is compatible with global justice. This, of course, is a much more challenging task than simply stepping up production and providing more commodities and social welfare services.

Democratic ecosocialists argue that Third World solidarity can be achieved by promoting greater self-reliance in both the North and South. This strategy requires delinking the economies of developed and developing nations by reducing the volume of international trade, disarming, and increasing aid to developing countries. However, as Frankel and Ryle note, democratic ecosocialists must also encourage international co-operation to ensure control of transnational corporations and financial institutions, which will require parallel and reciprocal moves by other nations if it is to be effective.[48]

(iv) Production for Human Need

Democratic ecosocialists emphasize the need to develop long term socio-economic solutions that will bring the economy under more democratic control. As we have seen, the ultimate goal of this project is to ensure that the allocation of resources is determined according to "genuine human need" rather than the dictates of the profit motive or remote bureaucratic planning. Williams, for example, looks forward to a redefinition of socialism that entails "a positive redemption of the central socialist idea of production for equitable use rather than for either profit or power."[49] This entails (i) "a long and difficult move away from the market economy," (ii) a shift in "production towards new governing standards of durability, quality, and economy in the use of non-renewable resources," and (iii) "as a condition of either of the former, we have to move towards new kinds of monetary institutions, placing capital at the service of these new ends."[50] The urgent democratic ecosocialist task, then, is

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48. Frankel, Post-Industrial Utopians, pp. 260-63, and Ryle, Ecology and Socialism, p. 86.

49. Williams, Towards 2000, p. 216.

50. Ibid., p. 256.

the development of new, democratic institutions that can give expression to the goal of self-management and production for equitable need. So far, democratic ecosocialists have tended to advocate a combination of state and local community economic planning and self-managed worker co-operatives. Beyond these general ideas, however, there exists considerable debate on the question as to the proper extent and level of operation of market mechanisms and the degree of state involvement in economic planning.

One controversial ecosocialist blueprint has come from Andre Gorz, who has argued the case for a dual economy based on a fusion of the ideas of the young Marx and Ivan Illich. According to Gorz, Illich (like Marx), envisaged a "synergic relation between the heteronomous [i.e., socially necessary] and autonomous [personal, creative] modes of production" aiming at a reduction of working time and hence "the utmost expansion of the sphere of autonomy."[51] However, whereas Marx foresaw the withering away of the state under communism, Gorz envisages the continuation of the state as the centrepiece of a post-industrial political economy that will make possible the flourishing of an ecologically benign, "convivial society." Indeed, Gorz presents his post-industrial ecosocialist society as striking a new balance between the familiar strengths and weaknesses of liberalism and socialism. As to the latter, Gorz acknowledges the past difficulties of classical socialist doctrine in accepting social and political pluralism.[52] In particular, he argues that ecosocialists must reject the old socialist idea that everyone must surrender their individuality to the democratically determined objectives of a central plan, a Rousseauian "general will," or the technical imperatives of the social machine as engineered by the state. For Gorz, "the source of the theoretical superiority of socialism over capitalism is ... the source of its practical inferiority."[53] From a practical standpoint, he notes that at least market capitalism confers on everybody a private niche, a personal life outside

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51. See Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class, p. 96, and Ivan Illich, Tools for Conviviality (London: Calder and Boyars, 1973), pp. 22-24.

52. Farewell to the Working Class, p. 79.

53. Ibid.

the workplace where their autonomy is no longer sacrificed to the dictates of capital or the laws of the state.[54] In this respect, Gorz's dual economy is an attempt to preserve and foster the classical liberal ideal of autonomy of thought and action by extending the individual's private area of manoeuvrability beyond the reach of the dictates of social production, the state, and the law.

Notwithstanding Gorz's discussion of the virtues of liberalism, however, his notion of autonomy is ultimately more Marxist than liberal - indeed, it turns on Marx's distinction between freedom and necessity. As we saw in Chapter 4, Gorz endorses and extends Marx's argument that true freedom is dependent upon the rationalization and minimisation and sharing of socially necessary social labour. That is, true freedom is to be achieved not in the factory in the form of self-management but rather outside the factory in civil society in the form of creative, convivial activity. Accordingly, Gorz proposes a dual economy that is made up of (i) the sphere of heteronomy, which deals with the production of socially necessary goods and corresponds to the realm of necessity (to be managed by the state), and (ii) the sphere of autonomy (corresponding to the realm of freedom, to civil society) where individuals can do what they want or create what they want using a free supply of convivial tools. The goal of the sphere of heteronomy (i.e., the state) is to enhance the sphere of autonomy by providing those socially necessary goods and services that cannot be supplied in the autonomous sphere with the same degree of efficiency.[55]

Ultimately, Gorz (like Marx and Marcuse) regards the expanded forces of production (which today includes not only automation, specialization, division of labour, and large scale organization but also computerization) as a crucial agent of

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54. On this point, Gorz rejects as dangerous and simplistic Bahro's argument that this sphere of privacy represents a sort of "'compensation' for the repression and frustration of the 'emancipatory needs' of individuals under capitalism." (Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class, p. 80, quoting Rudolf Bahro, The Alternative in Eastern Europe, p. 253 and following.) In Gorz's view, the private niche accorded to individuals under capitalism is not always filled by mindless consumption and frivolous leisure activities but rather is used to pursue many creative, personally fulfilling activities that are important ends in themselves. Indeed, he argues that for many people it is the sphere in which "real life" takes place.

55. Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class, p. 101.

human emancipation on the ground that they reduce the time taken to perform "socially necessary labour." That is, the utilization of these forces of production is seen as both necessary and desirable to enable the conditions for the contraction and redistribution of socially necessary work time that will ultimately see to the expansion of the sphere of autonomy, where economic logic need no longer apply.[56] Gorz argues that heteronomous work must obey the technical imperatives of large scale organizations in order to minimize social labour time and maximize autonomous activity; collective planning, forecasting, computerization, and the like are necessary tools to this end. Moreover, heteronomous work must be standardized, simplified, and made interchangeable so that it can be performed by all "active" members of the population. Gorz makes no apologies for the fact that such work does not allow for individual self-fulfilment - indeed, he concedes that such work may be quite dull - since it must conform to technical imperatives. However, he argues that it is a worthwhile "price" to pay in order to keep "the sphere of necessity" to a minimum (Gorz agrees with the mature Marx that it can never be totally abolished). The upshot would be that waged work will no longer be the centre of anyone's life, yet it would provide everyone with a guaranteed living income, thereby enabling the recentering of life around self-determined, non-waged activities. Such an income would represent an equitable distribution of the wealth created by society's productive forces considered as a whole - which individuals have combined to produce through their shared, intermittent work.

In the sphere of autonomy, on the other hand, individuals will be concerned with free-time and local neighbourhood activities where diversity rather than uniformity will be the norm. Insofar as these activities involve producing or creating things, they will concern "the optional, gratuitous, superfluous, of all which is not necessary, which gives life its spice and value; as <u>useless</u> as life itself, yet exalting life as the one end which gives all others their meaning" (by "useless" here Gorz means valuable for its own sake rather than as a means to some end such as subsistence).[57]

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56. Gorz, <u>Paths to Paradise</u>, see p. 46.

How, then, is environmental protection to be secured under Gorz's dual economy? This turns on Gorz's distinction between the systematic and collective needs of society and the ethical norms of individuals and small communities.[58] As we have seen, he envisages that the sphere of heteronomy would be planned by the state and governed by technical imperatives; these imperatives are regarded as simply the function of "external necessity" rather than as ethical norms of a kind chosen by self-determining individuals. Just as economic regulation is a technical matter to be planned by the state, so too is ecological regulation. Indeed, Gorz insists that it is impossible to derive an ethic from either economic or ecological reasoning.[59] Rather, he treats both economics and ecology merely as scientific tools that measure different levels of efficiency:

> In the same way that economics is concerned with the external constraints that individual activities give rise to when they generate unwanted collective results, ecology is concerned with the external constraints which economic activity gives rise to when it produces environmental alterations which upset the calculation of costs and benefits.[60]

Although Gorz does not provide any further elaboration on the matter of environmental regulation, it would seem to follow from his dual economy and his characterization of ecology as a technical issue that environmental matters such as energy budgets, resource use, pollution control, nature conservation, recycling, and workers' safety would fall within the province of the state and need not concern citizens, at least in their autonomous activities (although Gorz envisages that citizens would use durable, convivial tools in their free time activity). As we shall see in the following chapter, such an approach stands in stark contrast to the community self-management approach of ecoanarchists, who seek full democratic participation in political, economic, and ecological decision making. Moreover, the ecoanarchists' goal of rounded, ecologically benign human development is not dependent on any distinction between freedom and necessity or ethics and technical imperatives. Not

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57. Ibid., p. 57.

58. Farewell to the Working Class, Chapter 8.

59. Ecology as Politics, pp. 15-16.

60. Ibid., p. 15.

surprisingly, some ecoanarchists (notably Bookchin) are scathing in their critique of Gorz's technocratic post-industrial utopia. According to Bookchin, Gorz's analysis is riddled with paradoxes in attempting to combine central planning with neighbourhood self-help initiatives and worker self-management. In particular, Bookchin argues that Gorz promises the impossible - central planning without bureaucracy - but "tells us virtually nothing about the administrative structures around which his utopia will be organized."[61] As Richard Swift asks, what will prevent the heteronomous sphere or state from becoming "a center for the centralization of power? The tools for political abuse remain here."[62] Similarly, Boris Frankel has argued that Gorz's dual economy as "fraught with economic and political inconsistencies."[63] In particular, Frankel observes that Gorz "conceives of states in too narrow a political or administrative form."[64] Moreover, it is not clear what role, if any, the market would play in Gorz's dual economy.[65]

From an ecocentric perspective, Gorz's own brand of ecosocialism is not only politically flawed in naively defining the activities of the state - most notably, the provision of basic needs and environmental protection - as mere technical administration that is outside the realm of ethics and public participation. It is also philosophically flawed in perpetuating the Marxian distinction between freedom and necessity. As we saw in Chapter 4, the idea that true human freedom lies beyond the realm of socially necessary labour actively encourages the technological subjugation

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61. Murray Bookchin, review of Ecology as Politics, by Andre Gorz, Telos 46 (1980-81): 176-90 at p. 182.

62. Richard Swift, "Liberation from Work," review of Paths to Paradise, by Andre Gorz, Kick it Over, Winter 1986-1987, pp. 16-17 at p. 17.

63. Frankel, Post-industrial Utopians, p. 60.

64. Ibid., p. 63.

65. In Paths to Paradise Gorz has modified his dual economy by introducing a third tier known as the sphere of micro-social activity that will partially mediate between the spheres of autonomy and heteronomy. This third tier would be "organized on a local level and based on voluntary participation, except where it replaces macro-social [i.e., heteronomous] work in providing for basic needs" (p. 63). Such a modification does little to answer criticisms concerning Gorz's silence on the question of citizen participation in the sphere of socially necessary production.

of the nonhuman world in order to minimize such labour. Accordingly, any emancipatory ecopolitical theory that rests on such a distinction is irredeemable from an ecocentric perspective since human freedom and embeddedness in nature are posited as inversely related. As I argue below in my discussion of the meaning and role of ecology in democratic ecosocialism, Gorz's ecotopia is based on a thoroughly human-centred ecological perspective that takes no cognizance of the needs of nonhuman life-forms.

It should be clear that Gorz's dual economy is not necessarily representative of democratic ecosocialism as a whole, although there is no unanimity among other democratic ecosocialists on the matter of detailed alternatives. All that can be safely generalized is that the fulfilment of basic needs and the provision of social services would be in some way funded by the wealth produced by society as a whole. For Martin Ryle, this requires "a clear break" with existing economic practice and a move toward a different structure of needs that owes more to William Morris than to Marx.[66] As to the role of the market, democratic ecosocialists generally advocate increasing state control over market activity to enable ecological restructuring and the provision of basic needs as well as the regaining of public control over key resources (both economic and ecological). According to Ryle:

> While market-like mechanisms might continue to play an important role - providing consumer choice and flexibility in the supply of commodities - in an ecologically planned economy, these central economic functions would need to be planned in [a] directly political fashion.[67]

Although many democratic ecosocialists acknowledge that an unregulated market has certain advantages over a centrally planned economy in terms of efficiency and flexibility in the satisfaction of consumer wants, they argue that these advantages are overshadowed by the serious contradictions between market logic and ecological imperatives. Boris Frankel, in particular, rejects "market socialism" (in particular, the market socialism advocated by Alec Nove in The Economics of Feasible Socialism) on the ground that social and ecological objectives would be continually

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66. Ryle, Ecology and Socialism, pp. 64 and 69.

67. Ibid., p. 65.

compromised by national and international market forces.[68] In short, most democratic ecosocialists argue that if we are to avoid both the "tragedy of the commons" and extreme wealth differentials then the only feasible alternative to the free market is economic planning, provided it is of a kind that provides for full community participation and the diversification and decentralization of political and economic power.

(v) The State Under Ecosocialism

It should be clear from the preceding discussion that democratic ecosocialists regard the state as playing a vital role in controlling the operation of market forces and in laying down the framework for a socially just and ecologically sustainable society. According to Ryle:

> If one is to be honest ... about the objectives which an ecologically enlightened society would set for itself, it is difficult to avoid concluding that the state, as the agent of the collective will, would have to take an active law-making and -enforcing role in imposing a range of environmental and resource constraints.[69]

This entails giving up, in the name of the "common good," a range of Western freedoms concerning the use of land and private capital as part of the process of ecological restructuring. As Ryle argues:

> Above all, it calls into being a collective subject, a "we," able to make political and cultural decisions directly, and this implies the transcendence of the atomised individualism of the market place as ultimate arbiter.[70]

As we shall see in the following chapter, this aspect of the democratic ecosocialist case stands in stark contrast to the strongly anti-statist position of ecoanarchists. That is, ecoanarchists would argue that the collective "we" is the local community rather than the state and that society is best transformed through popular

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68. See Frankel, Post-industrial Utopians, pp. 93-97, and Alec Nove, The Economics of Feasible Socialism (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1983). For a general democratic ecosocialist discussion of the kind of economic restructuring that might be relevant to the Australian economy, see John Wiseman, Peter Christoff, Rob Watts, Lorrie Read, Rob Reid-Smith, Joe Camilleri, Ian Ward, and Boris Frankel, New Economic Directions for Australia, Discussion Paper, Department of Social Work, Phillip Institute of Technology, Victoria, (April, 1988).

69. Ryle, Ecology and Socialism, p. 60.

70. Ibid., p. 65.

struggles, exemplary action, and local self-help initiatives. Indeed, many ecoanarchists wish to see the abolition (rather than the shrinking) of the modern nation state on the ground that it is inherently hierarchical in usurping the decision making power of the local community.

While democratic socialists support the goal of community empowerment, they argue that this would be facilitated rather than thwarted by the state by means of protecting civil liberties, intervening in the market, redistributing resources between classes and regions, and providing international diplomacy (indeed, Frankel has argued that democracy would not survive the abolition of state institutions).[71] Moreover, democratic ecosocialists argue that some degree of bureaucratic administration is inevitable if economic and ecological planning is to proceed. They argue further that the potential for bureaucratic domination or political abuse in an expanded state would be offset by parallel moves that extend the opportunity for democratic participation in all tiers of government. I shall return to this important dialogue in my discussion of ecoanarchism in Chapter 7.

The Meaning and Lesson of Ecology According to Democratic Ecosocialism

So far, my discussion has been mainly concerned to introduce democratic ecosocialist thought and identify the major areas in which it has departed from Marxist orthodoxy and the major areas in which it differs from other schools of emancipatory ecopolitical thought (most notably, ecoanarchism). In the remainder of this chapter, I intend to explore further some of the criticisms already foreshadowed in my discussion of Gorz's ecosocialism by returning to the central question in this inquiry: how consistent is democratic ecosocialism with an ecocentric perspective?

The heart of the philosophical difference between ecocentrism and democratic ecosocialism concerns the meaning and relevance of ecology to emancipatory ecopolitical theory. We have seen from our discussion of the democratic ecosocialist analysis of the environmental crisis that democratic

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71. Frankel, Post-industrial Utopians, p. 263.

ecosocialists regard the demands of the environmental movement for a safe and healthy environment are but a subset of the modern radical project. That is, the more environmental movement (by this they mostly have in mind what I refer to as the Human Welfare Ecology stream) is seen by ecosocialist theorists as part of a larger struggle to overcome capitalism and the accumulation and concentration of wealth into fewer and fewer hands. The radical environmental movement is seen to be part of that larger struggle because it highlights the incompatibility of market rationality with ecological limits by revealing the many ways in which the economic "externalities" of private capital have seriously compromised human welfare, health, and survival. Indeed, Pepper has argued "that most radical environmentalist aims are probably inherently socialist by nature" and in any event, "are certainly ... not compatible with laissez-faire capitalism."[72]

As we have seen, the political priorities that emerge from this analysis of the ecological crisis are clear: to replace capitalism with a mode of production that satisfies genuine human need. The fundamental issue for democratic ecosocialists, then, is not simply human survival. What is at stake, and what is now attainable, according to democratic ecosocialism, is the full realization of human autonomy within a safe and healthy physical environment and a democratic and co-operative social environment. In terms of my characterization of emancipatory ecopolitical theory in Chapter 1, democratic ecosocialists may be seen as revising the participatory theme of the New Left in the light of the survivalists' case in order to produce an anthropocentric emancipatory ecopolitical theory. Significantly, most democratic ecosocialists reject the idea that ecology can effect a fundamental paradigm shift in political theory along the lines suggested by many Green theorists (such as Capra, Spretnak, and Porritt).[73] According to Ryle, ecological science can

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72. Pepper, "Radical Environmentalism," p. 115. See also Pepper, The Roots of Modern Environmentalism (London: Croom Helm, 1984), p. 199.

73. Fritjof Capra and Charlene Spretnak, Green Politics: The Global Promise (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1984), and Jonathon Porritt, Seeing Green: The Politics of Ecology Explained (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1984).

provide the limits and framework within which political and economic decisions must be made, but it

> ... does not in itself determine in a positive sense the future development of social and economic reality ... Ecological limits may limit political choice but they do not determine them ... we should not assume that "ecology" can satisfactorily define the new politics we are trying to develop.[74]

Similarly, both Pepper and Weston reject the idea that ecological principles should provide the basis for a new politics as a confused mixture of romanticism, elitism, and ecological determinism.[75] According to Pepper, such an approach leads to an excessive preoccupation with "nature protection" and deflects attentions away from the social origins of environmental degradation.[76] What must be grasped, they argue, is that the "environment" is an essentially human context that is socially determined rather than something before which we must humbly "submit."[77] More generally, democratic ecosocialists argue that if we wish to retain a commitment to the modern political ideals of justice, equality, and liberty, then we must look to the lessons of human history (in particular, the various tributaries of socialist thought) rather than natural history. Indeed, Gorz has gone so far as to declare that "it is impossible to derive an ethic from ecology."[78]

In support of the argument that ecological principles cannot provide the basis for a new politics, democratic ecosocialist theorists frequently point out that it is possible to have a society that respects ecological limits but is undemocratic and authoritarian. As Gorz explains:

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74. Ryle, Ecology and Socialism, pp. 7-8.

75. Weston, "Introduction," p. 2, and Pepper, "Radical Environmentalism," p. 121. See also David Pepper, "Determinism, Idealism and the Politics of Environmentalism - A Viewpoint," International Journal of Environmental Studies 26 (1985): 11-19.

76. Indeed, Pepper describes such concerns as reactionary and "largely an elitist defence of what a minority of ex-urbanites saw as 'wild nature' or 'traditional landscapes.'" Pepper, "Radical Environmentalism," p. 121. See also Frankie Ashton, "Green Dreams, Red Realities," N.A.T.T.A. Discussion Paper No. 2, Alternative Technology Group, The Open University, Milton Keynes, U. K., 1985.

77. Pepper, "Radical Environmentalism," p. 121.

78. Gorz, Ecology as Politics, p. 16.

> Ecology, as a purely scientific discipline, does not necessarily imply the rejection of authoritarian, technofascist solutions. The rejection of technofascism does not arise from a scientific understanding of the balances of nature, but from a political and cultural choice. Environmentalists use ecology as the lever to push forward a radical critique of our civilization and our society. But ecological arguments can also be used to justify the application of biological engineering to human systems.[79]

Not surprisingly, democratic ecosocialists reject the claimed "newness" of the Green movement and the idea that it has transcended old political rivalries and instead point out the continuities between Green politics and many strands of socialism.[80] The only "newness" of the Green movement is seen to reside in its recognition of "ecological limits" - something that democratic ecosocialists agree cannot be ignored.[81] "The point," argues Gorz, "is not to deify nature or to 'go back' to it, but to take account of a simple fact: human activity finds in the natural world its external limits."[82]

Yet the democratic ecosocialist argument that it is impossible to "derive" an ethic from ecology is misleading insofar as it suggests that ecocentrism represents a naive form of authoritarian ecological determinism while ecosocialism recognizes the active presence of humankind in constructing and shaping "ecological reality." The environmental ethic of democratic ecosocialism and ecocentrism are both informed by ecology but the environmental ethic of democratic ecosocialism is simply a different and more limited kind of ethic than that of ecocentrism. That is, the democratic ecosocialist ethic is a prudential ethic that largely represents an amalgamation of the Resource Conservation and Human Welfare Ecology perspectives, both of which are informed by life sciences such as ecology but which ultimately rest on anthropocentric norms of efficiency and human health and welfare.

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79. Ibid., p. 17.

80. David Pepper, The Roots of Modern Environmentalism, pp. 193-94. See also Peter C. Gould, Early Green Politics: Back to Nature, Back to the Land, and Socialism in Great Britain 1880-1900 (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester, 1988).

81. The terms of this debate were framed as early as 1974 by Hans Magnus Enzensberger in "A Critique of Political Ecology," New Left Review 84 (1974): 3-31. Since then, most of the discussion of the ecological crisis by democratic ecosocialist theorists (e.g., Ryle, Gorz, Weston, Pepper, Bell, and Hulsberg) has been mainly couched in the language of "ecological limits" or "constraints" on human action.

82. Gorz, Ecology as Politics, p. 13.

Ecocentrism is also informed by the life sciences but it too finds its ultimate justification in a normative rather than scientific framework. Indeed, as I argued in Chapter 2, to appeal to nature as known by the science of ecology rather than to ethics as the ultimate arbiter of a Green political theory is misguided. As we also saw in Chapter 2, an ecocentric normative framework subsumes the human-centred norms of efficiency, health, and welfare in a broader ecological matrix that seeks the mutual flourishing of all life-forms. Such a perspective does not seek to downgrade human creativity nor deny the extent to which humans influence ecological and evolutionary processes. Rather, it asks that we employ our creativity to develop technologies and lifestyles that allow for the continuation of a rich and diverse human and nonhuman world.

To return to the democratic ecosocialist critique, if the only "lesson" provided by ecological science is one of ecological limits then it is indeed possible to have a range of different political regimes - including fascist ones - that observe such limits. Robert Heilbroner's An Inquiry into the Human Prospect, which is essentially concerned with human survival, is a clear case in point.[83] Of course, an ecofascist regime might be successful in ensuring human survival (or, more likely, the survival of certain privileged classes of humans) and quite possibly the survival of many nonhuman life-forms. However, it would achieve this by severely restricting opportunities for human participation and self-determination - a route that is incompatible with the general ecocentric norm of mutual unfolding of both the human and nonhuman worlds. For democratic ecosocialists to reject ecocentrism on the ground that it does not rule out fascism is to mistake the inclusive nature of the ecocentric norm of "emancipation writ large." This is not to say that ecocentric theorists would necessarily rule out all forms of state coercion. The ecocentric commitment to the flourishing of all life means that ecocentrism is obliged to endorse the use of coercive measures where it is necessary to protect innocent victims from

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83. Robert L. Heilbroner, An Inquiry into the Human Prospect (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974). For a discussion of the ecological ideas in Nazism, see Anna Bramwell, Ecology in the 20th Century: A History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

aggression and exploitation, whether it be human victims of physical violence or endangered species and habitats (e.g., wilderness policing).

Now the democratic ecosocialist rejection of the idea of a "paradigm shift" in Green political theory is correct insofar as it applies to inter-human struggles. When viewed from the perspective of the traditional political spectrum, ecocentrism is, and must continue to be, generally "more left than right" in contending with "old political rivalries" based on differentials in wealth, power, and social privilege. However, ecocentric theory is most certainly new in the way it seeks to reorient humanity's relationship to the rest of nature. In this respect, it represents a new constellation of ideas that challenges the anthropocentric and cornucopian assumptions of post-Enlightenment political thought and calls for a radical re-assessment of human needs, technologies, and lifestyles - all of which are fundamental political questions.

To be sure, democratic ecosocialism has itself travelled some distance down this new path insofar as it has acknowledged the many ways in which capitalism objectifies and commodifies both people and nonhuman nature.[84] However, the democratic ecosocialist critique of instrumental reason, like that of the Frankfurt School, ultimately comes to rest on the human-centred argument that it is wrong to dominate nature because it gives rise to the domination of people. For example, Gorz, in noting that the disregard of ecological limits will often set off an unwelcome ecological backlash, argues that

> ... it is better to leave nature to work itself out than to seek to correct it at the cost of a growing submission of individuals to institutions, to the domination of others. For the ecologist's objection to system engineering is not that it violates nature (which is not sacred), but that it substitutes new forms of domination for existing natural processes.[85]

And later, Gorz adds:

> Ecological concerns are fundamental; they cannot be compromised or postponed. Socialism is no better than capitalism if it makes use of the same tools. The total domination of nature inevitably entails a domination of people by the techniques of domination. If there were no other options, it would be

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84. See, for example, Williams, Towards 2000, pp. 214-15.

85. Gorz, Ecology as Politics, p. 18.

> preferable to have a non-nuclear capitalism than a nuclear socialism, for the former would weigh less heavily on future generations [my emphasis].[86]

Similarly, to the extent that ecosocialists argue for the cultivation of a new way of seeing the world as a delicate interdependence between life-forms rather than as available raw materials, it is based on the same human-centred justification. As Williams explains, "it is the ways in which human beings have been seen, as raw material, for schemes of profit or power, that have most radically to be changed [my emphasis]."[87]

Of course, this democratic ecosocialist concern for human betterment is laudable in and of itself. From an ecocentric perspective, however, it means that the case for the recognition and protection of nonhuman species is forever tethered to the cause of human emancipation. As Rodman has observed, Gorz has an intuition that we should "let nature be" not because it is sacred but because its makes us freer.[88] While such an argument has a place within any ecocentric emancipatory theory (indeed, it serves to bolster such theory in that it shows that the flourishing of human and nonhuman life need not be a zero sum game), it provides no defence for threatened nonhuman species in those cases where there is no appreciable link with human domination and where such species appear to provide no present or potential use or interest to humankind. Moreover, as I argued in my critique of the Human Welfare Ecology perspective in Chapter 2, such an argument also serves to reinforce anthropocentric attitudes. As John Livingston has aptly put it, at best, wildlife might "emerge as a second-generation beneficiary" from Human Welfare Ecology reforms.[89] In this respect, Raymond Williams' views on wildlife preservation are telling:

> ... we are not going to be the people ... who simply say "keep this piece clear, keep this threatened species alive, at all costs." The case of a threatened species

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86. Ibid., p. 20.

87. Williams, Towards 2000, p. 262.

88. John Rodman, review of Ecology as Politics, by Andre Gorz, Human Ecology 12 (1984): 319-25 at p. 324.

89. Livingston, The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1982), p. 42.

> is a good general illustration. You can have a kind of animal which is damaging to local cultivation, and then you have the sort of problem that occurs again and again in environmental issues. You will get the eminences of the world flying in and saying: "you must save this beautiful wild creature." That it may kill the occasional villager, that it tramples their crops, is unfortunate. But it is a beautiful creature and it must be saved. Such people are the friends of nobody, and to think that they are allies in the ecological movement is an extraordinary delusion.[90]

This, of course, is consistent with my identification of wilderness or wildlife preservation as one of the "litmus tests" that enables us to distinguish ecocentric from anthropocentric emancipatory theorists. That is, wherever there is an apparent conflict between human interests and the interests of nonhuman species (in this case the protection of wildlife) that appear to be of no use to humankind, democratic ecosocialists consistently dismiss nonhuman interests.

Similarly, to the extent that democratic ecosocialists have contributed to the human population debate (the other "litmus test" issue), it is usually by way of a critique of what are seen as the "neo-Malthusian" arguments of population control advocates such as Paul Ehrlich - a critique that follows the spirit, if not the letter, of Marx's critique of Malthus.[91] According to this argument, the real causes of resource scarcity, famine, and environmental degradation are not the existence of too many people or the limited carrying capacity of the earth but rather social factors such as the maldistribution of resources and inappropriate technology, which arise under the capitalist mode of production.[92] The democratic ecosocialist solution, then, is not

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90. Raymond Williams, Socialism and Ecology (London: Socialist Environment and Resources Association, n.d.), p. 14. See also Williams, The Country and the City, p. 82.

91. See, for example, Enzensberger, "A Critique of Political Ecology," pp. 13-15. Marx had argued that the apparent phenomenon of over-population under capitalism arose not as a result of natural conditions but rather as a result of the contradictions in the capitalist relations of production - in particular, its need to maintain an "industrial reserve army." See Michael Perelman, "Marx, Malthus, and the Concept of Natural Resource Scarcity," Antipode 11 (1979): 80-84.

92. These arguments received a considerable public airing in the debate between Barry Commoner and Paul Ehrlich in the early 1970s. On the Ehrlich/Commoner debate, see Paul Ehrlich, The Population Bomb (New York: Ballantine Books, 1970; revised ed., London: Pan/Ballantine, 1972) and Barry Commoner, The Closing Circle: Nature, Man and Technology (New York: Bantam, 1972). For an exchange of views, see Paul Ehrlich, John Holdren, and Barry Commoner, "Dispute: The Closing Circle," Environment 14 (1972): 24-25, 40-52.

birth control but the replacement of capitalism with a co-operative social order that uses ecologically appropriate technologies for the satisfaction of human need.[93]

From an ecocentric perspective, the democratic ecosocialist response goes only part of the way toward addressing the population problem. First, it fails to consider the many ways in which growing absolute numbers of humans can magnify environmental degradation and therefore impair the overall quality of human life. Second, it fails to consider the impact of growing absolute numbers of humans on the nonhuman community - a limitation that arises from the exclusive democratic ecosocialist preoccupation with human welfare. As I explain in the following chapter in my response to Murray Bookchin's critique of the ecocentric approach to the population issue, the environmental impact of humans is a function not only of technology and affluence (i.e., level of consumption) but also absolute numbers of humans.[94] From an ecocentric perspective, it is not enough simply to wait for the "demographic transition" (i.e., the lower birth and death rates that usually follow improved living standards) to achieve a stable and well fed human population since the price of such a transition is further widespread ecological degradation and species

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93. See, for example, Pepper, The Roots of Modern Environmentalism, pp. 167-69. On the more specific problem of world hunger, most democratic ecosocialists focus on the need for land redistribution and a general shift in diet toward plant protein rather than on the need for birth control. See Francis Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, with Cary Fowler, Food First: Beyond the Myth of Scarcity (New York: Ballantine, 1979). On the more general question of the human population explosion, see Frances Moore Lappe and Rachel Schuman, Taking Population Seriously (London: Earthscan Publications, 1989). Lappe and Schuman provide an excellent analysis of the power structures that contribute to high birth rates in developing countries. Although their primary focus is on the social causes and consequences of, and social solutions to, rapid population growth, Lappe and Schuman nonetheless argue (unlike most democratic ecosocialists) that their analysis is capable of incorporating a nonanthropocentric perspective (see pp. 70-71). In particular, they urge their readers to be cognizant of the impact of human population not only on humans but also on nonhuman life (see p. 4).

94. As Paul and Anne Ehlich point out, the key to understanding the role of human population growth in the environmental crisis lies in the equation I = PAT (with I representing environmental impact, P representing the absolute size of the human population, A representing affluence or level of resource consumption, and T representing the environmental disruptiveness of the technologies that provide the resources consumed). See Paul R. Ehrlich and Anne H. Ehrlich, The Population Explosion (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), pp. 58-59. This basic formula was first published in P. R. Ehrlich and J. P. Holdren, "Impact of Population Growth," Science 171 (1974): 1212-17.

extinction. To minimize ecological degradation during this transition period, ecocentric theorists argue that it is necessary to bring about, in addition to technological and distributional reforms and a lowering of resource consumption, a wide range of humane family planning measures with a view to stabilizing and then reducing human population. By "family planning measures" I have in mind not only free contraceptives and free birth control information and counselling but also affirmative action to improve the status and social opportunities of women as well as ecological education that explains, inter alia, the impact of human growth on ecosystems and the need to reduce the size of families to one or two children. The synergetic effect of introducing ecologically benign technologies and lowering energy and resource consumption as well as lowering the birth rate would have a much more dramatic result in terms of lessening environmental degradation and protecting biotic diversity than would the more limited democratic ecosocialist solution.

To conclude, then, the ecological perspective of democratic ecosocialism may be seen as an unapologetic reassertion of anthropocentrism and a general dismissal of the ecocentric emancipatory theorists' generalized concern for human and nonhuman welfare. This is reflected in the democratic ecosocialist theorists' analysis of the environmental crisis, in their political priorities, and in their interpretation of the "message of ecology," namely, that ecological science merely informs us of the limits to human activity but it cannot provide the basis for a new ethics or politics. As we shall see in the following chapter, the ecoanarchist Murray Bookchin has criticized Gorz's ecosocialism for adopting a technocratic form of environmentalism that fails to yield a new ecological sensibility. Despite Gorz's intention to go beyond Marxism, Bookchin argues that Gorz has merely fused Marxism and environmentalism, transcending neither.[95] Indeed, this particular aspect of Bookchin's critique of Gorz may be applied to democratic ecosocialism in general. That is, democratic ecosocialism may be seen as merely fusing Human Welfare Ecology with democratic socialism, transcending neither.

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95. Bookchin, review of Ecology as Politics, especially pp. 178-82.

The Anthropocentric Foundations of Socialism

Having reached the above conclusion concerning democratic ecosocialism, I now want to draw together some of the basic assumptions that have informed all of the families of ecosocialism examined in this inquiry. This will provide the opportunity for a brief recapitulation of the central ecocentric critique of the various ecosocialist contributions to emancipatory ecopolitical thought before I turn my attention, in the next chapter, to the relationship between ecocentrism and ecoanarchism.

Notwithstanding the considerable diversity of socialist thought and the impossibility of providing an exhaustive and exclusive definition of socialism, I propose to trace and examine some basic premises and preoccupations that inform its critical posture toward capitalism. I am not claiming that these premises and preoccupations are common to every strand of socialism or that they are unique to socialism, only that they capture a basic orientation of socialism that is carried forward in the ecosocialist thought examined in this inquiry. (To the extent that these premises are shared by other social and political traditions, then those traditions are equally vulnerable to the criticism I intend to make.)

Ecosocialism carries forward a major preoccupation of socialist thought in general: to find an allocative system that ensures production for human need as an equitable alternative to the social and economic order spawned by capitalism. This preoccupation is generally associated with a reaction against the possessive individualism of liberalism together with some kind of alternative egalitarian claim to the effect that, at a minimum, all persons are entitled to have their basic needs met from society's wealth. This alternative claim may be seen as the universalistic core of much socialist thought in that it is based on respect for all persons. This is reflected in the constant search for more co-operative, equitable, and democratic economic arrangements that maximise the mutual self-realization (i.e., fulfilment of human potential) of all rather than the individual self-realization of the few (namely, the strong, the competitive, the privileged, and the lucky). These political ideals of

equality of entitlement and/or opportunity are variously posited as ideals that are to have priority over other modern political ideals such as freedom and democracy, as ideals that are to be somehow balanced with the ideals of freedom and democracy, or as ideals that will enable the universal realization of freedom and democracy. (The last approach is the more usual type of claim made by democratic socialist theorists.) Whatever the precise status of these ideals and whatever their intended form of realization, they are generally premised (whether explicitly or implicitly) on a recognition of the equal intrinsic worth and dignity of all humans.

Now this fundamental premise of the equal intrinsic worth and dignity of all humans is not unique to socialism; the idea of "the supreme and intrinsic value, or dignity, of the individual human being" has been identified by Steven Lukes as one of the "four unit ideas" of individualism, the other three unit ideas being rational autonomy, privacy, and self development.[96] Lukes argues that while these four ideas are logically and conceptually interrelated, "the idea of human dignity or respect for persons lies at the heart of the idea of equality, while autonomy, privacy and self-development represent the three faces of liberty or freedom."[97] Indeed, Lukes observes that the notion of human dignity or respect for all persons is one of the most basic ideas that has come to pervade modern social and political thought in the West to the point that it is now

> ... enshrined in the American Declaration of Independence, in the Declaration of the Rights of Man and in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948, which began by declaring its "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family."[98]

This principle of the intrinsic value or dignity of the human individual has a long and complex history in Western humanist thought and has been traced to both Christian and Greek philosophical sources. Lindsay, for example, has described the principle of the intrinsic value or dignity of the individual as being "the great

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96. Steven Lukes, Individualism (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), p. 45 and Part II generally.

97. Ibid., p. 125.

98. Ibid., p. 49.

contribution to individualism" of the New Testament and all Christianity.[99] Similarly, the historian Lynn White has argued that the medieval Christian world-view - which assigned to humans a leading role in the cosmic drama, with humans seen as standing between God and the rest of creation - has shaped modern science as well as the modern secular ideologies of Marxism and other "post-Christian humanisms."[100] In particular, these more secular humanisms share the Judaeo-Christian teleology of humanity's perpetual progress and mastery of the nature (as Bertrand Russell said of Marx: "Marx professed himself an atheist, but retained a cosmic optimism which only theism could justify").[101] However, the idea of human dignity and self-importance also forms a central aspect of the humanism of the Renaissance (perhaps the high point of which was Pico's Oration on the Dignity of Man, 1496), which signified a return to Greek sources and an open, inquiring mind (in contrast to the tradition of Scholasticism and religious authority).[102] Indeed, Sessions argues that while the notion of human self-importance vis-a-vis the rest of nature may be seen as arising from "the radically subjective epistemological development of Western philosophy since Descartes ... the roots of philosophical anthropocentrism can be traced to classical Greek philosophy."[103] Blackham also points out in his historical inquiry into humanism that all the essentials of humanism were well understood in antiquity. These include all the characteristics of an open

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99. Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, vol. 7, s.v. "Individualism," by A. D. Lindsay (New York: n.p., 1930-1933), pp. 674-80 at p. 676 (quoted by Lukes, Individualism, p. 45).

100. See Lynn White, Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis," Science 155 (1967): 1203-7, and George Sessions, "Anthropocentrism and the Environmental Crisis," Humboldt Journal of Social Relations 2 (1974): 71-81 at pp. 72-73.

101. Bertrand Russell, A History of Western Philosophy (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), p. 788-89, quoted by Sessions, "Anthropocentrism and the Environmental Crisis," p. 73.

102. George Sessions, "Ecocentrism and the Greens: Deep Ecology and the Environmental Task," The Trumpeter 5 (1988): 65-69 at p. 67. For an outline of the thought of Pico Della Mirandola, see W. L. Reese, Dictionary of Philosophy and Religion (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1980), p. 438. Pico's elevated view of humanity led him to reject astrology on the ground that "the stars cannot control human destiny because a lower being cannot control a being of a higher order" (ibid).

103. Sessions, "Anthropocentrism and the Environmental Crisis," p. 76.

society, such as the free exchange of ideas and goods, as well as the "separation of the divine and the human, with concentration upon the human development of an alternative to religion."[104] Moreover, he argues:

> The peak periods of "humanisms," namely, the Greek Enlightenment, the Renaissance, the European Enlightenment and its prolongation into various movements of the nineteenth century ... were formative periods that transformed a dominant part of the original Europe of the Church into modern secular industrial democracies.[105]

Blackham concludes that the post-Enlightenment tradition of humanism had, by the 19th century, become agnostic, positivist, and concentrated on humanity as its own end.[106] It was also a tradition that had inherited the progressive ideals of les philosophes: "enlightenment - reason, tolerance, and humanity; emancipation - liberty, equality, fraternity."[107] Indeed, Blackham has elsewhere described the Enlightenment as the "golden age of humanism."[108] And, of course, it was the Enlightenment that had been so "prodigious of political theory, much of it liberal, universalist, secular, and anti-authoritarian."[109] For example, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) - whose ideas had a lasting influence on modern political and legal thought - laid down a moral philosophy that was based, inter alia, on the principle that humans, as rational beings, belonged to a "kingdom of ends" and therefore could not be treated as mere means. This gave rise to Kant's famous "categorical imperative": act as if the maxim of one's act were to become a universal law. Although Kant did conclude that it was morally wrong to mistreat nonhuman animals, he did so on the

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104. Blackham, Humanism (New York: International Publications Service, 1976), p. 112. Blackham identifies two general streams of humanism: "a mainstream tradition which became dominant in Europe after the Renaissance and a minority tradition which expressly excludes the divine and immortal from human interests" (ibid., p. 103).

105. Ibid., p. 102.

106. Ibid., pp. 126-28.

107. Ibid, p. 126.

108. See H. J. Blackham, "Humanism: The Subject of the Objections," in Objections to Humanism, ed. H. J. Blackham (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin, 1965), pp. 7-28 at p. 9.

109. See Roger Scruton, A Dictionary of Political Thought (London: Pan Books, 1982), p. 149.

ground that it might lead to the maltreatment of humans rather than on the ground that nonhuman animals themselves possessed inherent worth or mattered to themselves.[110] This radically subjective epistemological tradition of modern Western philosophy, which celebrated the human mind and its powers of reason, extends from Descartes, Kant, and Hegel to phenomenology and existentialism.[111]

It is noteworthy that Lukes, like most modern political theorists, finds the modern humanist principle of universal human dignity to be a self-evident, moral truth - something that is so obvious and compelling that it is unnecessary to provide any further exploration of its content, ambit, and basis. As Lukes puts it:

> In general, this idea of the dignity of the individual has the logical status of a moral (or religious) axiom which is basic, ultimate and overriding, offering a general justifying principle in moral argument.[112]

Yet it is precisely this modern principle of the equal intrinsic worth and dignity of all humans that is now being re-examined by environmental philosophers in the wake of the ecological crisis. This re-examination has not been directed to the notion of dignity or intrinsic value per se. Rather, it has been directed to the fact that it is generally taken to reside exclusively, or at least pre-eminently, in humans - a belief that environmental philosophers argue has resulted in the systematic favouring of human interests over the interests of the nonhuman world. As David Ehrenfeld observes, while humanism "has its nobler parts," and therefore ought not to be totally rejected,

> ... we have been too gentle and uncritical of it in the past, and it has grown ugly and dangerous. Humanism itself, like the rest of our existence, must now be protected against its own excesses. Fortunately, there are humane alternatives to the arrogance of humanism.[113]

The various arguments against the anthropocentric legacy of humanism together with the arguments in favour of an ecocentric alternative have already been

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110. See Elizabeth M. Pybus and Alexander Broadie, "Kant and the Maltreatment of Animals," Philosophy 53 (1978): 560-61.

111. Sessions, "Anthropocentrism and the Environmental Crisis," see p. 76.

112. Lukes, Individualism, p. 51.

113. David Ehrenfeld, The Arrogance of Humanism (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. xiii-xiv.

canvassed in Chapter 2 and need not be repeated here. It will suffice merely to emphasize that any political philosophy (of which socialism is but one major example) that uncritically incorporates these pervasive yet problematic assumptions that are embedded in our otherwise laudable humanist heritage will remain unable to seriously entertain the idea of respect for nonhuman nature for its own sake. The result will be the perpetuation of a systematic blindness or disinterestedness toward those kinds of environmental degradation that do not appear to impinge on human interests. It has been a major contention of Chapters 4 and 5 and this chapter that it is the unquestioned acceptance of these anthropocentric assumptions by ecosocialist theorists that has given rise to a limited ecological perspective and held back the progressive evolution of ecosocialist thought. This explains why the ecological perspective of all of the varieties of ecosocialism examined in this inquiry has been unable to transcend the Resource Conservation, Human Welfare Ecology, and utilitarian Preservation perspectives outlined in Chapter 2.

Conclusion

Having explored some of the historical sources of the anthropocentric assumptions embedded in socialist thought that have been carried forward in ecosocialist thought, it is fitting to conclude with a recapitulation of the different forms in which these assumptions have been characteristically expressed in the different families of ecosocialist thought identified in this inquiry. It will be recalled from my discussion in Chapter 2 that social and political theories, as Fox has pointed out, are often legitimated on the ground that they will enable the realization of whatever are taken to be the most important qualities of "humanness."[114] Whatever these qualities, they are defended as providing us with our human dignity or worthiness in that the cultivation of these qualities helps to distinguish us from, and "raise" us above, the rest of nature. For example, as Andrew McLaughlin points out, if we are considered to be essentially homo faber, the fabricator or tool maker,

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114. Warwick Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels," Environmental Ethics 11 (1989): 5-25 at pp. 22-23.

> ... then our history appears as a nearly linear progression forward in the domination of nature through the development of increasingly powerful technologies ... These advances appear as a progressive realization of human nature and yield a clear definition of human progress.[115]

Alternatively, if the criterion is taken to be our unique ability to communicate via language, then the more we can perfect that communicative ability through, say, aspiring toward the establishment of an "ideal speech situation," then the more we may be said to have progressed qua humans. More generally, if we are taken to be free, creative beings of praxis who consciously transform the world, ourselves, and our social relations, then the removal of any impediments to, or the creation of the conditions that enhance, free self-determining activity represents progress in terms of human emancipation.

Each of these examples - taken from Marx, Habermas, and democratic socialist thought in general - indicate how particular conceptions of what is special about being human can determined what constitutes human progress or human self-realization. (Where socialists differ from liberal political theorists is in their more concerted attempt to create the social, political, and economic conditions that will enable all members of the human family to realize whatever is taken to be their special human potential.) Of course, not all of these conceptualizations of what is special about being human are equally problematic from an ecocentric perspective. The orthodox eco-Marxist conceptualization of what it means to be human constitutes the most active kind of socialist discrimination against the nonhuman world. As I argued in Chapter 4, Marx's conception of human beings as homo faber amounted to an invitation to expand the "forces of production" and subdue the rest of nature to the greatest possible extent so that humans could control the nonhuman world for human purposes. By contrast, the humanist eco-Marxist and democratic ecosocialist conceptualizations of what it means to be human are considerably more tempered and may be seen as constituting passive, as distinct from aggressive, expressions of anthropocentrism insofar as they discriminate against the nonhuman world, in varying

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115. Andrew McLaughlin, "Homo Faber or Homo Sapiens?," The Trumpeter 6 (1989): 21-24 at p. 21.

degrees, generally by omission rather than active commission.[116] In other words, while they do not actively promote the domination of the nonhuman world, their exclusive focus on human well-being means that they systematically fail to consider the special interests and needs of the nonhuman world. In the case of humanist eco-Marxism, the price of overcoming human alienation from "inner" and "outer" nature is the thoroughgoing domestication of the nonhuman world in the name of human self-expression.

Habermasian Critical Theory, however, contains both passive and aggressive expressions of anthropocentrism. Habermas's communicative ethics, for example, are passively anthropocentric in that they are restricted to serving the interests of human speaking participants. Here, the nonhuman world is simply neglected - the dignity and rights of the human subject are secured at the expense of the nonhuman world. However, Habermas assumes a more explicit anthropocentric posture in his insistence that science can only know nature in instrumental terms. As I argued in Chapter 5, this limited conceptualization of science serves to actively reinforce rather than challenge the domination of the nonhuman world.

Now I must emphasize that my rejection of the anthropocentric premises of socialist thought - which have been carried over into ecosocialist thought - does not require a rejection of either the entirely defensible socialist concern to find an allocative system that ensures production for genuine human need or the more general and equally defensible concern to seek the mutual self-realization of all humans rather than the individual self-realization of some. Rather, I have tried to show that both of these concerns fall naturally into the orbit of the ecocentric perspective defended in this inquiry. In particular, there is already a strong resonance between ecocentric social goals and key democratic ecosocialist goals such as the "new internationalism," democratic participation, and production for human need. Indeed, there is a sense in which ecocentrism may be seen as extending and rounding out the basic socialist

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116. On the useful distinction between passive and active anthropocentrism, see Warwick Fox, Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism (Boston: Shambhala, 1990), forthcoming, p. 22 (page citations refer to the prepublication ms).

norm of mutual self-realization so that it encompasses the entire biotic community rather than just the human community. (As we saw in Chapter 2, transpersonal ecology theorists express the notion of self-realization in terms of cultivating a sense of self that sustains the widest possible identification with all beings.) This is highly significant in terms of the central question posed in Chapter 1, namely, does an ecocentric perspective have a natural ally in the existing pantheon of modern political traditions with which is can forge a theoretical linkage? That is, this general resonance between socialist concerns and ecocentric concerns on inter-human questions suggests that some ecosocialist principles and arguments might be selectively incorporated into the broader theoretical matrix of ecocentrism once they are divested of their anthropocentric limitations. This possibility would not extend to the more aggressive anthropocentric categories of Marxist thought that have been rejected in Chapter 4, nor the overly rigid theoretical categories of Habermas that have been rejected in Chapter 5. However, the possibility of theoretical bridge building does arise in the case of many of the principles of democratic ecosocialism discussed in this chapter (with the exception of the more Marxist influenced contribution of Andre Gorz). Such a possibility arises by virtue of the fact that both ecocentrism and democratic ecosocialism reject an atomistic model of reality in favour of a reciprocal model of internal relations (albeit with different horizons and ethical implications).[117] Moreover, the passive anthropocentrism that pervades most democratic ecosocialist thought is arguably not fatal to its revision and relocation into an ecocentric matrix. That is, it would seem possible to, as it were, excise the passive anthropocentric assumptions embedded in democratic ecosocialism without seriously distorting its basic theoretical orientation of inclusiveness. The fundamental norm of respect for all persons would thus become a subset of a more general norm of respect for all life-forms.

The upshot for democratic ecosocialism would be a widening of its field of moral considerability and compassion so that it reaches beyond the human

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117. For a brief discussion of this holistic model as it relates to socialism, see Worthington, "Socialism and Ecology," p. 78.

community to include all of the myriad life-forms in the biotic community. In particular, this would mean a broadening of the democratic ecosocialist approach to wilderness protection and human population growth in accordance with ecocentric goals. More generally, it would mean a broadening in the context of political, economic, and technological decision making so that human interests are pursued, wherever practicable, in ways that also enable the flourishing of other life-forms.

The upshot for ecocentrism would be a strengthening and broadening of its political and economic analysis that will enable it to determine the kinds of institutional changes and redistributive measures that would be required to ensure an equitable transition toward a sustainable and more co-operative society. It would also enable ecocentrism to anticipate and address in a more concerted way the likely forms of opposition that will be encountered in the attempt to give practical expression to ecocentric emancipatory goals. In this respect, democratic ecosocialists are right to argue that capital will not be placed at the service of emancipatory goals without increasing government intervention in the market and without a gradual democratization of the economy. Finally, as I show in the following chapter, the democratic ecosocialist discussion of the potential "enabling role" of the state in facilitating the realization of emancipatory goals provides an informative and pragmatic counterpoint to the anti-statism and excessive idealism of many ecoanarchist theorists, notwithstanding the stronger ecocentric orientation of the latter.

Chapter 7

Ecoanarchism: The Non-Marxist Visionaries

Introduction

In the previous three chapters I examined emancipatory ecopolitical theories that have either drawn upon, or otherwise maintained some general sympathy or continuity with, the extensive heritage of Marxism. In this chapter I examine a body of emancipatory ecopolitical theory that defines itself, by and large, as a distinct alternative to, rather than as an extension, reformulation, or revision of, this Marxist heritage.[1] This body of Green political theory is ecoanarchism. The following chapter on ecofeminism is also non-Marxist in character and has a degree of sympathy with ecoanarchism, although ecofeminism possesses a number of unique features that warrant its separate treatment.

In this chapter I identify and evaluate two general currents of ecoanarchist thought - social ecology and ecocommunalism (the latter includes bioregionalism and what I call "ecomonasticism"). While the two general currents of social ecology and ecocommunalism differ in many important respects they both share the following features. First, as my overarching anarchist categorization indicates, both seek to by-pass and/or abolish the modern nation state and confer maximum political and economic autonomy on decentralized local communities. Second, both argue not only that anarchism is the political philosophy that is most compatible with an ecological perspective but also that anarchism is grounded in, or otherwise draws its inspiration from, ecology (indeed, many observers consider that nonviolent, communitarian anarchism is the political philosophy that has most affinity with the Green movement).[2] Third, the theorists discussed in this chapter not only oppose all

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1. I say "by and large" since there are some theorists in this current who are ex-Marxists and whose work bears the stamp of this legacy (e.g., Murray Bookchin and Rudolf Bahro) and others about whom the question as to whether they are indeed a Marxist, ethical socialist, or anarchist/libertarian is hotly debated (e.g., William Morris).

forms of social domination but also oppose, in varying degrees, the domination of the nonhuman world; expressed more positively, ecoanarchism seeks emancipation writ large. In particular, all ecoanarchists ground their political theory on an ecological perspective that seeks to transcend the Resource Conservation, Human Welfare Ecology, and Utilitarian Preservation perspectives to which the ecophilosophical perspectives of eco-Marxism (including Habermasian Critical Theory), and democratic ecosocialism are limited. Fourth, all of the ecoanarchist theorists discussed in this chapter are strong defenders of the grassroots and extra-parliamentary activity of the Green movement. Fifth, and finally, all of these theorists emphasize the importance of maintaining consistency between ends and means in Green political praxis.

Beyond this, however, ecoanarchists divide in terms of the various theoretical explanations they offer to account for the ecological crisis (e.g., social ecology attaches greater theoretical importance to social hierarchy than does ecocommunalism); the types of ecocommunities they advocate (e.g., social ecology is more libertarian whereas the ecomonastic strand of ecocommunalism tends to be relatively more ascetic); and the degree to which they are critical of the Western anthropocentric heritage (e.g., the ecocommunal tradition - particularly bioregionalism - is generally more ecocentric than social ecology). A further difference is that social ecology is largely the work of one particular theorist - Murray Bookchin - who has developed a distinctive organismic ecophilosophical perspective whereas ecocommunalism is a more general category that I use to encompass a variety of other kinds of ecoanarchist approaches of a relatively more ecocentric persuasion.

In view of these differences I have divided the first part of this chapter into two general sections dealing with social ecology and ecocommunalism respectively. The criticisms that are unique to each particular general current, and each particular tributary, of ecoanarchism are dealt with in this discussion while those criticisms that

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2. For example, Johan Galtung, "The Green Movement: A Socio-Historical Exploration," International Sociology 1 (1986): 75-90 at p. 79.

are common to ecoanarchism in general are dealt with in the evaluative discussion in the second half of this chapter. In both cases my discussion is concerned to explore and assess the case for ecoanarchism in the light of the ecocentric goals of social and ecological emancipation. In particular, I ask: how consistent is ecoanarchism with an ecocentric world-view? In any event, is an anarchist polity the only kind of polity that is consistent with an ecocentric emancipatory politics? Is ecoanarchism nonetheless the political philosophy that is most conducive to the promotion of ecocentric goals? I conclude that while certain strands of ecoanarchism are undoubtedly ecocentric in their general orientation, no ecoanarchist theorist has mounted a convincing case for the necessity of the abolition of - as distinct from a greater devolution of power from - the modern nation state and, further, that ecocentric goals are more likely to be realized by the retention and reform of the state rather than its abolition. Finally, drawing in part on democratic ecosocialism, I argue that a multi-tiered, democratic polity is more consonant with an ecocentric model of freedom in the context of the modern world than a stateless society.

The Social Ecology of Murray Bookchin

Murray Bookchin stands as one of the early pioneers of emancipatory ecopolitical theory in his advocacy of an alternative ecological society that will enhance rather than restrict freedom. Over the past three decades, Bookchin's numerous publications on "social ecology" have sought to undermine the cleavage between the social and the natural worlds and restore a sense of continuity between human society and the creative process of natural evolution as the basis for the reconstruction of an ecoanarchist politics.[3] Bookchin describes his thought as

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3. Bookchin's publications are too numerous to list exhaustively here. His major books include Our Synthetic Environment (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), published under the pseudonym Lewis Herber; Post-Scarcity Anarchism (Berkeley: Ramparts Press, 1971); Toward an Ecological Society (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1980); The Ecology of Freedom (Palo Alto, California: Cheshire, 1982); The Modern Crisis (Philadelphia: New Society Publishers, 1986); and The Rise of Urbanization and the Decline of Citizenship (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1987). Along with the five last-mentioned books, the major articles by Bookchin relevant to the present discussion are "Toward a Philosophy of Nature - The Bases for an Ecological Ethic," in Deep Ecology, ed. Michael Tobias (San Francisco: Avant Books, 1984), pp. 213-35; "Theses on Libertarian Municipalism," Our Generation 16 (1985): 9-22;

carrying forward the "Western organismic tradition" represented by thinkers such as Aristotle, Hegel, and, more recently, Hans Jonas - a tradition that is process oriented and concerned to elicit the "logic" of evolution.[4] According to Bookchin, the role of an ecological ethics is "to help us distinguish which of our actions serve the thrust of natural evolution and which of them impede it."[5] For Bookchin, evolution is developmental and dialectical, moving from the simple to the complex, from the abstract and homogenous to the particular and differentiated, ultimately toward greater individuation and freedom or selfhood. Social ecology - a communitarian anarchism rooted in an organismic philosophy of nature - is presented as the "natural" political philosophy for the Green movement because it has grasped this "true" grain of nature and can promise the widest realm of freedom or "selfhood" for both nonhuman nature and society. For Bookchin, an anarchist society, free of hierarchy, is "a precondition for the practice of ecological principles."[6]

Although democratic ecosocialism and social ecology represent quite distinct schools of emancipatory ecopolitical thought, there is nonetheless a superficial resemblance between the two. For example, it is noteworthy that Bookchin has become a major voice of the "Green Left" in North America, sharing many of the European democratic ecosocialists' criticisms of deep/transpersonal ecology (this is not surprising, given Bookchin's former Marxist leanings and his familiarity with Continental political theory). This shared critique arises from the fact that both social ecology and democratic ecosocialism emphasize, as their names might suggest, the social or inter-human origins of environmental degradation - an emphasis that has led both to criticize the deep/transpersonal ecology focus on anthropocentrism for deflecting attention away from inter-human inequities such as

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"Freedom and Necessity in Nature: A Problem in Ecological Ethics," Alternatives 13 (1986): 29-38; "Thinking Ecologically: A Dialectical Approach," Our Generation 18 (1987): 3-40; and "Social Ecology Versus 'Deep Ecology': A Challenge to the Ecology Movement," Green Perspectives: Newsletter of the Green Program Project, Summer 1987, pp. 1-23.

4. Bookchin, "Thinking Ecologically," p. 4.

5. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 342.

6. Bookchin, Post-Scarcity Anarchism, p. 70.

those based on class, gender, and race.[7] It is also interesting to note that Bookchin has claimed that the West German Green party "has supplanted the traditional socialisms with a social ecology movement."[8] As we saw in Chapter 6, many democratic ecosocialists claim that the West German Green Party is essentially an ecosocialist party! The many factions within the West German Green party are such that both claims have some degree of truth.

Beyond these superficial similarities, however, social ecology departs fundamentally from democratic ecosocialism in terms of both analysis and ecophilosophical perspective. Whereas democratic ecosocialists have singled out capitalism as the main driving force behind environmental degradation, Bookchin has conducted a more wide ranging critique that regards capitalism as but a subset of a more deep seated problem, namely, social hierarchy. Bookchin's social ecology, then, is not Marxist - it is libertarian:

> To create a society in which every individual is seen as capable of participating directly in the formulation of social policy is to instantly invalidate social hierarchy and domination. To accept this single concept means that we are committed to dissolving State power, authority, and sovereignty into an inviolate form of personal empowerment.[9]

Bookchin is also critical of what he regards as the productivist and authoritarian legacy of socialist thought and its lack of a thoroughgoing ecological perspective.[10] Indeed, Bookchin's critique of Andre Gorz's ecosocialism is no less vehement than some of his recent criticisms of deep ecology. As we saw in Chapter 6, Bookchin has dismissed Gorz's ecosocialism for being fraught with paradoxes in attempting to combine central bureaucratic planning with neighbourhood self-help initiatives and

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7. For a thoroughgoing response to these criticisms by a leading deep (or, as he would say, transpersonal) ecology theorist, see Warwick Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels," Environmental Ethics 11 (1989): 5-25.

8. Murray Bookchin, "On the Last Intellectuals," Telos 73 (1987): 182-85 at p. 182.

9. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 340.

10. See, for example, Murray Bookchin, "Beyond Neo-Marxism," Telos 36 (1978): 5-28 and the chapter "On Neo-Marxism, Bureaucracy, and the Body Politic," in Toward an Ecological Society, pp. 211-48. See also John Clark, The Anarchist Moment: Reflections on Culture, Nature and Power (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1984).

worker self-management. Despite Gorz's professed aim of going beyond Marxism, Bookchin argues that Gorz has merely fused Marxism and environmentalism, transcending neither, in a "politics that is environmentally oriented, not an ecological sensibility that is meant to yield a political orientation."[11]

Bookchin argues that social ecology, on the other hand, is grounded in an ecological sensibility that rejects the human-centred, instrumental posture toward nature that is characteristic of socialist thought. This follows from Bookchin's organismic philosophy, which recognizes "subjectivity" as present, however germinally, in all phenomena, not just humans. (By "subjectivity" Bookchin means any kind of purposive activity or striving, whether latent or advanced.[12]) Indeed, prior to Bookchin's much publicized attack on deep ecology at the National Greens Conference in Amherst, Massachusetts in July 1987, many ecopolitical theorists regarded social ecology and deep ecology as complementary ecophilosophies.[13] Both Naess's deep/shallow ecology distinction and Bookchin's social ecology/environmentalism distinction (introduced in Chapter 2) were critical of scientism and a purely instrumental orientation toward the nonhuman world; both

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11. Murray Bookchin, review of Ecology as Politics, by Andre Gorz, Telos 46 (1980-81): 176-90 at p. 179.

12. As Bookchin explains: "The term subjectivity expresses the fact that substance - at each level of its organization and in all its concrete forms - actively functions to maintain its identity, equilibrium, fecundity, and place in a given constellation of phenomena" (Ecology of Freedom, p. 275).

13. See Bookchin, "Social Ecology Versus 'Deep Ecology.'" This is by no means the first critique of deep ecology delivered by Bookchin, but it is the most polemical and has become the most notorious. For some responses and counter-responses to this critique, see Kirkpatrick Sale, "Deep Ecology and its Critics," The Nation, 14 May 1988, pp. 670-75; for Bookchin's reply ("As if People Mattered") and Sale's counter-reply ("Sale Replies"), see The Nation, 10 October 1988, pp. 294 and 314; George Sessions, "Ecocentrism and the Greens: Deep Ecology and the Environmental Task," The Trumpeter 5 (1988): 65-69; Bill Devall, "Deep Ecology and its Critics," The Trumpeter 5 (1988): 55-60; for letters and responses by Bill McCormick, Bill Devall, George Sessions, and Arne Naess, see Green Synthesis, September 1988, pp. 3-5; for a reply, see Murray Bookchin, "A Reply to My Critics," Green Synthesis, December 1988, pp. 5-7; Brian Tokar, "Exploring the New Ecologies: Social Ecology, Deep Ecology and the Future of Green Political Thought," Alternatives 15 (1988): 30-43 (footnote 21 of Tokar's article contains many more references to the debate); contributions by Bill Devall, Mike Kaulbars, Bill McCormick, and Brian Tokar in Alternatives 16 (1989): 49-54; and Arne Naess, "Finding Common Ground," Green Synthesis, March 1989, p. 910.

sought to re-embed humans in the natural world; and, at a more practical level, both supported bioregionalism, small-scale decentralized communities, cultural and biological diversity, and "appropriate" technology.

Despite these important commonalities, however, there are fundamental differences in the ecophilosophical orientation of deep/transpersonal ecology and social ecology that have given rise to fundamentally different perspectives concerning humanity's proper role in the evolutionary drama. These different orientations toward human stewardship are reflected in the different positions taken by deep/transpersonal ecologists and social ecologists in regard to what I have earlier identified as the two "litmus test" ecological issues, namely, human population growth and wilderness preservation. These differences will be discussed below. The point I wish to emphasize here is that since Bookchin's much publicized critique of deep ecology, the differences between social ecology and deep/transpersonal ecology have now become much more discussed, and hence much more marked, than the many commonalities. Not only are important ecophilosophical issues at stake here; there is also a struggle to influence the political priorities of the growing Green movement.

For the purposes of the following examination, Bookchin's oeuvre may be conveniently divided into his social philosophy and his ecological ethics, although both are closely interrelated. In the first section, I evaluate Bookchin's central contention that the root of the ecological crisis is social hierarchy. In the following section, I examine whether Bookchin's ecological perspective is, in any event, an ecocentric philosophy of the kind defended in this inquiry. Does it offer the widest realm of freedom for both the human and nonhuman worlds as Bookchin claims? Here I will be drawing out the major differences between, on the one hand, what might be called Bookchin's "ecological humanism" and, on the other hand, an ecocentric perspective, in the context of a discussion of the litmus issues of wilderness preservation and human population growth. I conclude that the kind of ecological freedom promised by Bookchin is best delivered by an ecocentric emancipatory perspective (of which transpersonal ecology is but one example) rather than by Bookchin's ecological humanism.

(i) Bookchin's Social Hierarchy Thesis

From as early as the 1960s Bookchin has maintained the thesis that the domination of nonhuman nature by humans arose from the domination of humans by humans. This argument finds its most developed expression in Bookchin's magnum opus The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy.[14] In this work, Bookchin seeks to explore and develop this thesis by tracing the emergence of hierarchy and domination in human societies from the Palaeolithic Age to modern times. According to Bookchin, the breakdown of early, "organic" or pre-literate communities based on kinship ties into hierarchical and finally class societies, culminating in the State, was to gradually undermine the unity of human society with the nonhuman world. Bookchin argues that incipient domination arose originally in preliterate societies in the form of social hierarchies rooted in age, sex, and quasi-religious and quasi-political needs. These social hierarchies are presented as providing the conceptual apparatus of domination or what Bookchin calls the "epistemologies of rule" - the repressive sensibility of command and obedience that enables some humans to see others as objects of manipulation. According to Bookchin, "from this self-imagery, we have extended our way of visualizing reality into our image of 'external' nature."[15] This position has been reaffirmed in his more recent writings, where he argues that

> ... the domination of nature first arose within society as part of its institutionalization into gerontocracies that placed the young in varying degrees of servitude to the old and patriarchies that placed women in varying degrees of servitude to men - not in any endeavour to "control" nature or natural forces. Various modes of social institutionalization, not modes of organizing human labour (so crucial to Marx), led to domination. Hence, domination can be removed only by resolving problematics that have their origins in hierarchy and status, not simply class and the technological domination of nature.[16]

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14. For an earlier statement of this thesis, see Bookchin, Post-Scarcity Anarchism, p. 63.

15. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 350. Bookchin argues that "the objective history of the social structure becomes internalized as a subjective history of the psychic structure" (ibid., p. 8). In other words, it is the institutions of human domination that fostered the development of a metaphysics of radical separation between subject and object, which then made possible the domination of the nonhuman world.

Bookchin's thesis that the domination of "external nature" by humans stems from the domination of humans by humans is a reversal of the general Marxist reading of history (welcomed by orthodox Marxists as a necessary stage toward communism and lamented by the first generation of Critical Theorists) that it is the increasing human mastery of nature that has given rise to class society and social domination. According to Bookchin, this Marxist reading of history saw the domination of nature as wedded to human survival in a hostile natural world that was "mute," "stingy," and "cruel." What was seen as humanity's ascent toward freedom from material want therefore demanded struggle, conquest, and our increasing disembeddedness from nature in order to overcome natural necessity. Social ecology, on the other hand, does not see the conquest of nature as the necessary "price" of human freedom. Rather, it looks to nature as the ground of freedom and seeks to re-embed humans in the natural world.[17] This, argues Bookchin, demands the creation of a libertarian, stateless society, with the notion of libertarianism being guided by Bookchin's description of the ecosystem: "the image of unity in diversity, spontaneity, and complementary relationships, free of all hierarchy and domination."[18] This translates politically into a society that is free of "gerontocracies, patriarchies, class relationships, elites of all kinds, and finally the State, particularly in its most socially parasitic form of state capitalism."[19]

The radical thrust of social ecology is seen to derive from its ecological outlook, which recognizes what is seen to be the nonhierarchical interdependence of living and nonliving things. According to Bookchin, the case for hierarchy is undermined once we perceive nature from the perspective of social ecology, that is, "as a web - a circular inter-lacing nexus of plant/animal [including human] relationships," rather than as a ladder or a pyramid. Such a perspective is also seen to come from those strands of ecofeminism that are based on an alternative,

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16. Bookchin, "Thinking Ecologically," pp. 7-8, footnote 1.

17. Ibid., p. 7, see footnote 1.

18. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 352.

19. Ibid., p. 353.

nonhierarchical sensibility of reciprocity (these ecofeminist perspectives are discussed in detail in the following chapter.)[20] According to Bookchin, such an ecological outlook implicitly undermines the conventional notion that hierarchy is part of the "natural" order of things:

> What renders social ecology so important is that it offers no case whatsoever for hierarchy in nature and society; it decisively challenges the very function of hierarchy as a stabilizing or ordering principle in both realms.[21]

Only human communities are seen to be capable of creating repressive structures and institutions that are capable of taking on a life of their own. In this respect, Bookchin explains that "the seemingly hierarchical traits of many animals are more like variations in the links of a chain than organized stratifications of the kind we find in human societies and institutions."[22] Bookchin argues that only an ecological society can avoid, or at least minimize, these pitfalls because it is free of the domineering sensibility that is institutionally fostered in a hierarchical society.

Although Bookchin warns that we must avoid anthropomorphic judgements that project the distinctive features of these socially created institutions onto the nonhuman world, he considers that the reverse is both legitimate and desirable. That is, in the context of an appreciation of Bookchin's ecological tenets, we may "transpose the nonhierarchical character of natural ecosystems to society" provided we do not reduce social ecology to natural ecology.[23] This one-way mapping of ideas flows directly from Bookchin's organismic philosophy of nature, according to which humans are "nature rendered self-conscious," able to discern the thrust of evolution.

The problems associated with this last-mentioned aspect of Bookchin's work are treated in more detail in the following section on Bookchin's ecological ethics. In this section I want to confine my critical comments to two aspects of Bookchin's

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20. Ibid., p. 341.

21. Ibid., pp. 36-37.

22. Ibid., p. 29.

23. Ibid., p. 36.

social hierarchy thesis, namely, his method of justification and the plausibility of his argument. By method of justification, I am referring to Bookchin's assertion that social hierarchy is undermined once we grasp that there is no hierarchy in nature. My contention is that it is not an adequate argument simply to invoke a presumed telos in nature as a justification for social ecology, since even if such a telos accorded with the picture of reality provided by modern science (which, in any case, I argue in the following section that it does not) this does not in itself tell us why we ought to follow it. As J. Hughes observes, "the reason for us to oppose hierarchy has to do with an existential human ethical decision, not with its 'unnaturalness.'"[24]

An evaluation of the plausibility of Bookchin's social hierarchy thesis requires a clarification of the concept of hierarchy. According to Bookchin, hierarchy is

> ... the cultural, traditional and psychological systems of obedience and command, not merely the economic and political systems to which the term class and state most appropriately refer ... I doubt that the word [hierarchy] can be encompassed by a formal definition. I view it historically and existentially as a complex system of command and obedience in which elites enjoy varying degrees of control over their subordinates without necessarily exploiting them. Such elites may completely lack any form of material wealth; they may even be dispossessed of it, much as Plato's "guardian" elite was socially powerful but materially poor.[25]

Bookchin also uses the term hierarchy to encompass a dualistic metaphysics or pyramidal sensibility that ranks the higher as superior and the lower as inferior, which he opposes to his metaphysics of "unity in diversity."

For Bookchin, then, hierarchy is not stratification per se. Rather, it is stratification plus a relationship of obedience and command that arises from a ranking of some strata as "higher" and others "lower." In this respect, he takes the definition somewhat beyond the etymology of the word hierarchy - from the Greek hieros (divine, holy) and arkhes (to rule) - which simply means "a system of persons or things arranged in a graded order" (i.e., this does not necessarily imply a relationship

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24. J. Hughes, "Beyond Bookchinism: A Left Green Response," Socialist Review 3 (1989): 103-8 at p. 107.

25. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 4.

of command and obedience).[26] Nonetheless, Bookchin argues that although hierarchy involves a relationship of command and obedience, it does not necessarily involve exploitation. (If it did, Bookchin's entire social hierarchy thesis would be rendered tautological.)

It is useful to compare Bookchin's notion of hierarchy with that of Fritjof Capra in The Turning Point. Whereas Bookchin insists that there is no hierarchy in nature, Capra maintains that hierarchy - or "stratified order" as he prefers to call it - is a basic principle of self-organizing systems. However, to avoid any misinterpretation in his discussion of what he calls the "systems view of life," Capra reserves "the term 'hierarchy' for those fairly rigid systems of domination and control in which orders are transmitted from the top down. The traditional symbol for these structures has been a pyramid."[27] Capra uses the notion of stratified order, in contrast, to refer to the multilayered structure of living organisms, with each layer (or what Arthur Koestler refers to as a "holon") exhibiting both self-assertive and integrative tendencies.[28] Capra employs the metaphor of a tree to explain such a system, since information and energy flow in both directions through many intricate and nonlinear pathways.[29] This seems to be what Bookchin is getting at in his nonhierarchical image of nature as "unity-in-diversity," although he talks of "differentiation" and "complementarity" rather than stratified order.

With this useful distinction between hierarchy and stratified order (or differentiation) in mind, we can now assess Bookchin's claim. Bookchin is concerned to criticize any social structure that inhibits self-determining activity, which is

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26. Collins English Dictionary (London: Collins, 1983).

27. Fritjof Capra, The Turning Point: Science, Society and the Rising Culture (London: Fontana, 1985), p. 305.

28. Arthur Koestler, Janus (London: Hutchinson, 1978), p. 57 (for a discussion, see Capra, The Turning Point, p. 27).

29. According to Capra, from an evolutionary point of view, living systems that exhibit stratified order are more resilient than nonstratified systems because they can break down into their various subsystems without being destroyed when disturbed. In this way they can evolve through both adaptation and creation. Nonstratified systems, on the other hand, are more likely to disintegrate altogether in the face of perturbations (ibid., pp. 303-4).

Bookchin's highest norm since it coincides with what he takes to be the thrust of evolution. The gist of Bookchin's argument seems to be that by ridding society of social hierarchy (as distinct from differentiation) we will remove the possibility of us developing hierarchical sensibilities vis-a-vis ourselves and the nonhuman world.

Bookchin's thesis can be interpreted in a number of ways. An emphatic version of his thesis might be that social hierarchy necessarily inhibits the free unfolding of the human and nonhuman worlds; the corollary of this is that self-determining activity is only possible in a nonhierarchical society. If this thesis were true, it would justify the complete abolition of all social hierarchy. Such an argument, however, is difficult to sustain. In human societies, social hierarchy can either enable or oppress, depending on the circumstance. Bookchin himself concedes that the existence of ranking (read "social hierarchy") in terms of social elites is not necessarily domineering, at least in relation to so-called "organic" societies, for he states that "the appearance of a ranking system that conferred privilege on one stratum over another, notably the young over the old, was in its own way a form of compensation that more often reflected the egalitarian features of organic society rather than the authoritarian features of later societies."[30] Indeed, it is possible to envisage circumstances where social hierarchy can provide meaning, identity, and a context that facilitates personal self-realization. Take, for example, a monastery in which members may at any time renounce their vows and leave but who nonetheless voluntarily submit themselves to the authority of the abbot or Zen Master. Here, the members are clearly self-determining individuals in the sense that they have freely chosen a disciplined lifestyle of obedience to a superior as a means of facilitating their own self-realization. Indeed, the monastic paradigm has been widely referred to by other ecoanarchist theorists such as Bahro and Roszak as providing an exemplar of ecocommunal living by providing social solidarity, identity, and ecological harmony, as I show below. Of course, this ecocommunal model of living does not necessarily require a guru, master, or governing committee at its apex. However, such a

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30. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, pp. 6-7.

hierarchical arrangement, when accompanied by the qualities of personal example, integrity, and leadership (both spiritual and otherwise) in those who "rule," are quite acceptable to this ecocommunal tradition.

Of course, there are countless examples of human societies where social domination can be attributable to some kind of social hierarchy. Indeed, it would seem plausible to argue (and this may be all Bookchin intends to argue) that social hierarchy is merely a necessary (as distinct from sufficient) condition for social domination. In this case it is not necessary to show that social hierarchy will always give rise to social domination in every case - only that it always be present in those cases where social domination does exist and that social domination will never be found in those societies in which social hierarchy is absent. Even here, however, one might want to consider the positive benefits of social hierarchy and weigh these benefits against the potential downside rather than argue that social hierarchy ought to be completely abandoned in every instance.

While the argument that social hierarchy gives rise to social domination has some plausibility, the second aspect of Bookchin's social hierarchy thesis is much more contentious, namely, that the root of the ecological crisis is social hierarchy and, accordingly, the solution to that crisis is the removal of all forms of social hierarchy. If by this argument Bookchin means that there is a necessary connection between social hierarchy and the domination of the nonhuman world, then his thesis can be simply refuted: first, by the many historical examples of hierarchical societies that have lived in relative harmony with the nonhuman world (e.g., Benedictine communalism, feudalism, many pre-literate societies), and, second, by the theoretical possibility of an egalitarian, nonhierarchical society that nonetheless continues to dominate the nonhuman world. As to the latter, Marx's communist society of the future would have been a clear example of this had it eventuated, as we saw in Chapter 4. As Fox puts it, "Bookchin's presentation of social ecology thus conveys no real appreciation of the fact that the relationship between the internal organization of

human societies and their treatment of the nonhuman world can be as many and varied as the outcome of any other evolutionary processes."[31]

Now it is possible that I have overstated or oversimplified this aspect of Bookchin's case - indeed, it is often very difficult to pin down Bookchin's arguments with any degree of precision. In view of this, it will be useful to examine a less emphatic and more qualified (and more plausible) version of his social hierarchy thesis as it relates to the nonhuman world. That is, it is possible to interpret Bookchin as saying only that history has shown that hierarchical societies create the psychological conditions for the domination of the nonhuman world but that the actual domination of the nonhuman world is dependent upon a society possessing the requisite tools. In this case, social hierarchy is merely a necessary as distinct from sufficient condition for the domination of the nonhuman world, just as it is merely a necessary as distinct from sufficient condition for social domination.

Yet even when Bookchin's thesis is expressed in these more qualified terms, it arguably has no more plausibility than the early Frankfurt School thesis that Bookchin reverses. As we saw in Chapter 5, the early Frankfurt School theorists had argued that the domination of external nature through the development of more sophisticated and large-scale technologies (a development that resulted from the ascendancy of instrumental rationality over other kinds of rationality) has given rise to social hierarchy and the domination of people. Note that the crucial link in both theses is the presence of a certain mental framework or way of seeing ("epistemologies of rule" in the case of Bookchin, instrumental reason in the case of the Frankfurt School); note also that in both cases the domination of the nonhuman world is dependent on this mental framework finding practical expression in repressive technologies. When broken down in this way, the qualified version of Bookchin's thesis and the Frankfurt School thesis may appear more as complementary (rather than oppositional) theses that examine, as it were, different sides of the same coin.

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31. Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 15.

Nonetheless, it is arguable that the Frankfurt School's thesis has more to commend it than Bookchin's thesis. If it is accepted that technology is our principal mediator with the rest of nature, conditioning how we conceive of and interact with ourselves and the nonhuman world, then the Frankfurt School's thesis concerning the link between social and ecological domination would seem to provide a more plausible explanation than either the emphatic or qualified versions of Bookchin's thesis. For example, the historical exploration of the oriental despotism of "hydraulic societies" by the Frankfurt School theorist Karl Wittfogel shows how large scale interventions in the "natural" flow of water through the mighty irrigation projects of ancient China, India, Mesopotamia, and Egypt necessitated large scale, totalitarian, and centralized bureaucracies that impoverished the lives of peasant populations.[32] More recently, the American environmental historian Donald Worster has employed the early Frankfurt School thesis to explain the highly centralized bureaucratic political order that accompanied the intensive irrigation of the Colorado River - a development that resulted in the farmers of the Colorado River basin becoming virtual wards of the massive U. S. Bureau of Reclamation.[33] A similar analysis might be applied to the hydro-industrialization policy of a succession of Tasmanian state governments from the 1920s to the mid-1980s, which resulted in the steady augmentation of the power of the State's Hydro Electricity Corporation to the point where it was, for a time, no longer answerable to Parliament for the conduct of its affairs.[34] In these and many other examples of large scale technological interventions in nature - such as the modern day massive hydroelectricity projects in

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32. Karl Wittfogel, Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957).

33. Donald Worster, "Water and the Flow of Power," The Ecologist 13 (1983): 168-74.

34. The significant turning point in this saga was the Australian grassroots environmental campaign to prevent the damming of the Franklin river. For an account of the impact of this campaign upon Tasmanian public affairs, see R. A. Herr and B. W. Davis, "The Tasmanian Parliament, Accountability and the Hydro-Electricity Commission: The Franklin River Controversy," Parliament and Bureaucracy. Parliamentary Scrutiny of Administration: Prospects and Problems in the 1980s, ed. J. Nethercote (Sydney: Hale and Iremonger, 1982), pp. 268-79.

India, Egypt, and Brazil - "'administered life' is coming to be the common experience for rivers, deserts, and people alike."[35]

Now Bookchin would no doubt reply that these examples support at least the qualified version of his social hierarchy thesis by pointing to a pre-existing social hierarchy in these societies that was able to envisage and implement these gigantic technological feats in the first place. Moreover, he would insist that if we are to overcome these domineering institutions, we must first change our social organization rather than our technologies because "a liberatory technology presupposes liberatory institutions."[36] Yet we have already seen that it is theoretically possible to have a society that is free of social hierarchy but that nonetheless dominates the nonhuman world through large scale technologies in order to minimise "necessary labour" (such as Marx's communist society). In this case, human emancipation is dependent on the domination of "external nature."

Of course, Bookchin rejects this Marxist route to human emancipation and emphasizes the importance of democratically manageable technologies and "soft" energy paths - reforms that Bookchin argues will naturally flow from the kind of social reorganization he envisages. However, in terms of the argument I wish to advance here it is not necessary to attempt to resolve this debate - indeed it is in all likelihood impossible to do so in view of the chicken-and-egg nature of the problem we are examining. The above debate simply highlights the mutually reinforcing nature of the domination of the human and nonhuman worlds by some humans, at least in relation to large scale, technological interventions in nature. It also highlights the complexity and mutually reinforcing relationship between a society's social and technical matrix and its orientation toward the nonhuman world. What I am primarily concerned about, however, are the different political priorities that flow from these opposing theses given that it is possible to address the general problem of domination from, as it were, opposite sides.

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35. Worster, "Water and the Flow of Power," p. 172.

36. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 243.

Although both approaches arrive at broadly similar political conclusions (that is, the need to move toward a society operating on the basis of smaller scale, decentralized and ecologically benign technology and energy sources, and greater local democracy and social co-operation) the political route by which such a society would be arrived at is quite different. Bookchin's thesis gives priority to removing social hierarchy; the resolution of ecological problems will come later by virtue of the general nonhierarchical sensibility that his anarchist society would engender, a sensibility that Bookchin argues would be extended to the nonhuman world. In contrast, the early Frankfurt School thesis gives priority to scaling down and reforming our technological interventions in the nonhuman world (and hence our material throughput), developing a more empathic sensibility toward "external" nature (and releasing those empathic, aesthetic, and expressive aspects of our "internal" nature), and ensuring that instrumental reason serves rather than determines political choices. This thesis maintains that opportunities for greater democratic participation and individual autonomy in society will flow from a reorganization of society's technological matrix, which would entail the breakdown of bureaucracies, the decentralization of energy resources, the development of a more socially responsible and democratic science, and the liberation of repressed human sensibilities.

Given the urgency of the ecological crisis, this second political route is preferable for the simple reason that the protection of the life-support capacity of ecosystems (through the introduction of ecologically benign technologies) is logically antecedent to the resolution of inter-human problems. This is the case whether one's ecological perspective is anthropocentric or ecocentric. Bookchin's social hierarchy thesis, however, gives strategic priority to dismantling all hierarchical institutions within society and establishing a direct democracy at the community level - the foundations for the establishment of an ecological society. Of course, Bookchin has also argued on many occasions for the cultivation of an ecological technics.[37]

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37. See, for example, the chapters "Energy, 'Ecotechnocracy' and Ecology" and "The Concept of Ecotechnologies and Ecocommunities," in Bookchin, Toward an Ecological Society.

However, in terms of his theoretical analysis, this would not be given the same priority as removing social hierarchy because the wide-spread use of ecological technics is made to depend upon the removal of social hierarchy. The question ecocentric theorists would pose is: can we afford to wait in view of the urgency of the ecological crisis and the alarming rate of species extinction? As Fox points out in his response to Bookchin's critique of deep/transpersonal ecology, the political priorities that flow from Bookchin's social hierarchy thesis mean that human social concerns systematically eclipse concerns regarding the fate of the nonhuman world.[38] Of course, ecocentric theorists would agree with Bookchin that the revival of local democracy and the breakdown of concentrations of economic and political power are essential to social emancipation (just as Bookchin accepts the need for an ecological technics). Yet, as Lorna Salzman argues, "a radical, ecologically inspired-politics that aims at ecological sanity and reconstruction necessarily subsumes all the issues of socio-economic injustice and oppression with which social ecologists are concerned."[39] For example, the straightforward decision by a democratically elected parliament to move toward a decentralized and predominantly solar and wind powered local economy would have the effect of breaking down the economic and political power of large scale, centralized bureaucracies and corporations. It would also change the scale and nature of institutions in such a way as to make them more amenable to participatory democracy.

Finally, as I argue later in this chapter in my evaluation of ecoanarchism, social emancipation is not incompatible with the continued existence of the state - indeed, it can be facilitated by the state. Moreover, I argue below that the urgency of the ecological crisis is such that we cannot afford not to "march through" and reform the existing institutions of liberal parliamentary democracy (where they are available and despite their many limitations) and employ the resources (legal, financial, and

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38. Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," see p. 17.

39. Lorna Salzman, "Politics as if Evolution Mattered: Some Thoughts on Deep and Social Ecology," Paper presented to the Ecopolitics IV Conference, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 21-24 September 1989, pp. 1-15 at p. 15. Fox also argues precisely along these lines in "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate."

diplomatic) of the state to promote national and international action, curb ecological degradation, and foster the redistribution of resources between the rich and poor nations of the world.

(ii) Bookchin's Evolutionary Stewardship Thesis

Bookchin's anarchist ideal of freedom is one that sees any kind of other- or external-directedness, as distinct from self- or internal-directedness, as thwarting impulses that are deemed to be natural and good. Like many anarchists, Bookchin enlists evolutionary theory to support the notion of the inherent sociality of humanity and to claim that any form of higher or external authority is against nature. In this respect, George Woodcock's general observations on anarchism are pertinent to social ecology:

> The whole world-view within which anarchism is embraced depends on an acceptance of the natural laws manifested through evolution, and this means that the anarchist sees himself as the representative of the true evolution of human society, and regards authoritarian political organizations as a perversion of that evolution.[40]

In this section, I want to explore the implications of the evolutionary picture of "nature" to which Bookchin appeals in justifying his anarchist politics rather than explore his method of justification per se. (I have briefly criticized the latter above and at length elsewhere.[41] Here I am looking at the desirability rather than the claimed objectivity of Bookchin's ecological ethics.) In particular, I will be focussing on the differences between Bookchin's ecological humanism and an ecocentric perspective and showing how they give rise to diverging responses to the litmus issues of wilderness preservation and human population growth.

As we have seen, Bookchin's organismic philosophy of nature is one that sees evolution as developmental and dialectical, moving from the simple to the complex, from the abstract and homogenous to the particular and differentiated,

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40. George Woodcock, "Anarchism: A Historical Introduction," in The Anarchist Reader (London: Fontana, 1983), pp. 11-56 at p. 27.

41. Robyn Eckersley, "Divining Evolution: The Ecological Ethics of Murray Bookchin," Environmental Ethics 11 (1989): 99-116 especially at pp. 106-110. Parts of this section draw on other arguments from this paper.

ultimately toward greater individuation and freedom or selfhood.[42] It is also a philosophy that emphasizes the active, creative role played by humans in the evolutionary drama. Bookchin often refers to humans as "nature rendered self-conscious," or, as J. Hughes has paraphrased it, the "forebrain of the ecosystem."[43] Bookchin emphasizes humanity's creative role in natural evolution by distinguishing between what he calls first and second nature, which is intended to capture the graded development of the human world (second nature) out of the nonhuman world (first nature):

> It is eminently natural for humanity to create a second nature from its evolution in first nature. By second nature, I refer to humanity's development of a uniquely human culture, a wide variety of institutionalized human communities, an effective human technics, a richly symbolic language, and a carefully managed source of nutriment.[44]

Second nature, according to Bookchin, enables first nature to act upon itself rationally:

> We cannot hope to find humanity's "place in nature" without knowing how it emerged from nature with all its problems and possibilities. Our result yields a creative paradox: second nature in an ecological society would be the actualization of first nature's potentiality to achieve mind and truth.[45]

This creative role assigned to humans in fostering nature's evolution is the essential basis upon which Bookchin rejects asceticism, stoicism, biocentrism (i.e., ecocentrism), or any world-view that he interprets as involving the "quietistic surrender" or resignation by humans to the natural order. Bookchin interprets such approaches (quite wrongly, in the case of ecocentrism) as idolizing and reifying

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42. Although the terms "freedom" and "selfhood" appear throughout Bookchin's writings as ultimate norms and the desiderata of evolution, he does not specifically define them. They are best encapsulated in the notion of self-directedness, which is central to both Bookchin's organismic nature philosophy and his social philosophy of anarchism - both of which have strong Hegelian overtones. Indeed, Bookchin acknowledges the Hegelian resonance but adds the qualification that his ecological dialectic differs from the Hegelian dialectic insofar as his ecological dialectic (a) is more concerned with the existential details of nature rather than the idea of nature, (b) does not terminate in an Absolute, (c) leans more toward differentiation rather than conflict, and (d) would "redefine progress to emphasize the role of social elaboration rather than social competition." See Bookchin, "Thinking Ecologically," pp. 26-27.

43. Hughes, "Beyond Bookchinism," p. 104.

44. Bookchin, "Thinking Ecologically," p. 21.

45. Ibid., p. 35.

nature and setting it apart from a "fallen humanity" - an approach that Bookchin claims is an insult to humanity by denying us our creative role in evolution.[46] There must be an infusion of human values into nature, he argues, because humans are the fulfilment of a major tendency in natural evolution. Indeed, Bookchin claims that our uniqueness cannot be emphasized too strongly "for it is in this very human rationality that nature ultimately actualizes its own evolution of subjectivity over long aeons of neural and sensory development."[47] The clear message of Bookchin's ethics, then, is that humanity, as a self-conscious "moment" in nature's dialectic, has a responsibility to rationally direct the evolutionary process, which in Bookchin's terms means fostering a more diverse, complex, and fecund biosphere. Indeed, he suggests that we may "create more fecund gardens than Eden itself."[48]

Bookchin's view of humans as evolutionary stewards is considerably at odds with an ecocentric orientation toward the world in two important respects. First, an ecocentric orientation, particularly that of deep/transpersonal ecology, is more concerned with "letting things be," that is, allowing the nonhuman world to unfold in its own way (the means of achieving this goal, of course, require active political engagement in defence of the earth). From a long term ecological and evolutionary perspective, adaptation, change, innovation, destruction, and extinction are recognized as basic features of natural systems, but rather than being fostered or accelerated they are allowed to unfold in accordance with natural successional and evolutionary time. Moreover, an ecocentric orientation does not see later, more developed, or more complex life-forms as necessarily "higher" or "better" than earlier, less developed, or more simple ones. This general orientation applies equally to

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46. This is a misinterpretation since the central concern of deep/transpersonal ecology theorists such as Arne Naess, Bill Devall, George Sessions, Warwick Fox, and Alan Drengson is to cultivate a sense of identification or empathy with all of nature (of which humans are part). This identification or empathy stems from the realization of our interdependence with other life-forms. This can hardly be interpreted as an approach that "reifies" nature and sets it apart from humanity since it clearly includes humanity.

47. Bookchin, "Thinking Ecologically," p. 20.

48. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 343.

human cultures and civilizations insofar as Western culture is not seen as "higher" or "better" than the cultures of indigenous peoples. (I am not suggesting here that Bookchin argues that certain human cultures are superior to others; I am merely elaborating, by way of example, the theoretical orientation of ecocentrism.) Second, an ecocentric perspective adopts a more humble position than social ecology insofar as it does not claim to know what the thrust or telos of evolution is. Rather, an ecocentric perspective remains open-minded toward what is seen as an essentially open-ended process. As Lorna Salzman points out:

> Extinction of species has been a fact - a second species of homo coexisted with h. sapiens until relatively recently. The fact that we are (or believe we are) the only self-aware species on earth (which we cannot prove) does not mean that this was evolution's impulse or "striving." We need not have survived at all; there was and is no "necessity" that we do so.[49]

From an ecocentric perspective, then, it is both arrogant and self-serving to make, as Bookchin does, the unverifiable claim that first nature is striving to achieve something (i.e., greater subjectivity, awareness, or "selfhood") that "just happens" to have reached its most developed form in us - second nature. Bookchin, in contrast, insists that "'Gaia' and subjectivity are more than the effects of life; they are [expressions of] its integral attributes."[50] His philosophy of nature is predicated on the intuition that there must be a telos (in the sense of a general directionality as distinct from a fixed end) in nature by virtue of the wondrous patterns it reveals:

> From the ever-greater complexity and variety that raises sub-atomic particles through the course of evolution to those conscious, self-reflective life-forms called human beings, we cannot help but speculate about the existence of a broadly conceived telos and latent subjectivity in substance itself that eventually yields intellectuality.[51]

Bookchin's speculations go well beyond the more parsimonious explanation for the evolution of human consciousness provided by modern evolutionary theory. Here, the basic Darwinian idea of natural selection (i.e., random mutation and "selective" environmental pressures) remains, despite many important additions and revisions,

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49. Salzman, "Politics as if Evolution Mattered," p. 15.

50. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 363.

51. Ibid., p. 364.

the cornerstone of modern evolutionary theory (although the emphasis has shifted from the evolution of an organism against an environment as background to the coevolution of an organism with its environment).[52] According to this picture, "evolution is basically open and indeterminate. There is no goal in it, or purpose, and yet there is a recognizable pattern of development."[53] Of course, the current scientific understanding of evolution is surrounded by much controversy and is hardly complete. But in the face of this uncertainty it is noteworthy how often we select, from a range of possible conclusions, those conclusions that are most comforting to humans. For his part, Bookchin scorns any attempt to explain the development of natural phenomena as an accident: "To invoke mere fortuity as the deus ex machina of a sweeping, superbly organized development that lends itself to concise mathematical explanations is to use the accidental as a tomb for the explanatory."[54]

But, as Fox and other nonanthropocentric environmental philosophers point out, the challenging thing about science vis-a-vis our understanding of our place in the scheme of things is that it often delivers us news about the universe that we might not wish to hear (indeed, George Sessions has argued that modern science has "been the single most decisive nonanthropocentric intellectual force in the Western world").[55] In developing an ecopolitical theory, then, we must remain open to this "news" while at the same time recognizing our own fallibility and the contingency of scientific explanation. In particular, ecocentric theorists, unlike social ecologists, are prepared to recognize that nature is not only more complex than we presently know but also quite possibly more complex than we can know. It is accordingly foolhardy to suggest, as Bookchin does, that we presently know enough about evolutionary

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52. Capra, The Turning Point, see p. 311.

53. Ibid., p. 312. See also Richard Dawkins, The Blind Watchmaker (London: Penguin, 1988).

54. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 354.

55. See George Sessions, "Anthropocentrism and the Environmental Crisis," Humboldt Journal of Social Relations 2 (1974): 71-81 at p. 73, and Warwick Fox, Toward a Transpersonal Ecology: Developing New Foundations for Environmentalism (Boston: Shambhala, 1990), forthcoming, pp. 14-16 (all page citations refer to the prepublication ms).

processes to foster and accelerate them. In particular, it is highly contentious to ascribe a purpose to a particular development on the basis of its outward results. The wisest course of action from an ecocentric perspective is not to presume that there is necessarily a telos in nature, nor to presume any knowledge of the ends of evolution, and instead remain open-minded and, wherever practical, simply "tread lightly" in the course of sustaining ourselves and our human society.

The different ecophilosophical orientations of social ecology and ecocentrism give rise to diverging responses when it comes to the controversial issues of wilderness preservation and human population growth. As to the first of these "litmus issues," it is noteworthy that Bookchin has said very little on the subject of wilderness preservation as compared to, say, issues concerning the urban and agricultural or "domestic" environment (i.e., second nature). Indeed, the one reference to wilderness I have come across in Bookchin's large oeuvre is generally dismissive of the idea of setting asides large tracts of wilderness:

> In advocating human stewardship of the earth, I do not believe it has to consist of such accommodating measures as James Lovelock's establishment of ecological wilderness zones ... what it should mean is a radical integration of second nature with first nature along far-reaching ecological lines.[56]

This view is in keeping with Bookchin's preoccupation with humans as ecological stewards, playing an active and creative role in the evolution of the planet. Indeed, the idea that large areas of "first nature" should be cordoned off as generally out of bounds to "second nature" (except for very low impact uses) is, in Bookchin's schema, as "unnatural" as the idea that the body should be segregated from the brain. Such a step would deny or curtail the opportunity for humans to "create more fecund gardens than Eden itself."[57] In sharp contrast to Bookchin, ecocentric theorists (particularly deep/transpersonal ecologists), consider that the preservation of large tracts of

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56. Bookchin, "Thinking Ecologically," p. 32. This is in contrast to fellow social ecology writer John Clark, who has written that "planetary integrity may require that much or even most of the earth be returned to the condition of wilderness." See John Clark, "The Promise of Social Ecology," in Renewing the Earth: The Promise of Social Ecology, ed. John Clark (Basingstoke, U.K.: Green Print, 1990), forthcoming, p. 21 (page citation refers to the prepublication manuscript).

57. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 343.

wilderness is now the most reliable and appropriate means of protecting a threatened array of nonhuman life-forms (and a diminishing number of indigenous human cultures) from the seemingly insatiable resource demands of human economic development. Indeed, ecocentric theorists are generally opposed to the idea of any further destruction of the remaining areas of wilderness throughout the world.[58] Moreover, the subject of wilderness has been a major preoccupation of, and inspiration for, ecocentric theorists and activists. Indeed, it has been the intensive philosophical investigation of wilderness issues and the question of the moral standing of nonhuman life-forms and entities by many ecophilosophers that has led to the formulation and development of the modern ecocentric perspective.

Consistent with their strong stand on the need for wilderness preservation, ecocentric theorists advocate a population policy that seeks a long term reduction in human numbers. This position flows directly from the ecocentric concern for biological and cultural diversity; from the ecocentric concern of allowing all beings to unfold in their own ways. To the extent that Bookchin's own approach to the population question can be discerned from his criticisms of ecocentrism, his emphasis has been on the need to overcome social hierarchy, decentralize society, redistribute resources, and cultivate an "ecological technics" rather than on the need to address the problem of absolute numbers per se by means of birth control programmes.[59] (In this

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58. For example, Anne and Paul Ehrlich have argued that "whatever remaining relatively undisturbed land exists that supports a biotic community of any significance should be set aside and fiercely defended against encroachment." See Anne H. Ehrlich and Paul R. Ehrlich, Earth (New York: Franklin Watts, 1987), p. 242. For a more general discussion, see George Sessions, "Ecocentrism and Global Ecosystem Protection," Earth First!, 21 December 1989, pp. 26-28.

59. On the vexed subject of human population, Bookchin's position has emerged largely as a response to, and critique of, certain controversial statements made by prominent members (such as Dave Foreman) of the U. S. environmental movement Earth First!, which Bookchin has wrongly taken as representative of the views of all Earth First! supporters as well as deep ecology theorists. For example, Foreman has remarked that it is better to leave Ethiopian children to starve than "save these half dead children who will never live a whole life. Their development will be stunted." See Dave Foreman, "A Spanner in the Woods," Interviewed by Bill Devall, Simply Living 2(12), n.d.: 40-43 at p. 43. Yet, as Fox points out, "it is as unreasonable for Bookchin to condemn the body of ideas known as deep ecology on the basis that he does as it would be for a critic of Bookchin to condemn the body of ideas known as social ecology on the basis of whatever personal views happen to be put forward by individual activists who support any environmental organization that claims to draw

respect, it is very similar to the democratic ecosocialist response to the population question.) Again, Bookchin's social philosophy is consistent with his ecophilosophical perspective (although Bookchin has not expressed his position in quite the following terms): if the telos of evolution is to maximise "subjectivity," and if humanity (second nature/nature rendered self-conscious) is the most developed form of "subjectivity" then it hardly makes sense to advocate a reduction in human numbers.

On the population question, then, Bookchin has much more in common with democratic ecosocialism than ecocentrism insofar as he points to social relations rather than human numbers per se as the "real causes" of famine and environmental degradation. Indeed, Bookchin has gone much further than ecosocialism in criticizing ecocentrism as racist and misanthropic for ignoring inter-human inequities. While it is not my concern to present a detailed overview of Bookchin's accusations in this controversy, it is important to lay to rest one serious misconception of the ecocentric position that arises from Bookchin's critique. As should be clear from my discussion of the population question in the previous chapter, ecocentric theorists do not only advocate a long term reduction in human numbers in response to the population issue, as some of their critics suggest. They also advocate a more equitable inter-human distribution of resources, a lower overall level of resource consumption per capita, and the introduction of ecologically benign technologies. Moreover, the charge by social ecologists and ecosocialists that the ecocentric analysis is Malthusian (i.e., famine is inevitable and/or necessary to preserve carrying capacity) is completely misleading since it conflates the debate concerning the relationship between human population, hunger, and food distribution (which is the basic Malthus/socialist controversy) with the debate concerning the relationship between human population

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on social ecology principles" (Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 20, footnote 38). Needless to say, deep/transpersonal ecology theorists and supporters have dissociated themselves from the controversial misanthropic utterances singled out by Bookchin. In addition to Fox, see George Sessions, "Ecocentrism and the Greens," p. 65-66; and Kirkpatrick Sale, "Deep Ecology and its Critics," p. 675. Naess has also made it clear that "faced with the problem of hungry children, humanitarian action is a priority." See Arne Naess, "Sustainable Development and the Deep Long-Range Ecology Movement," The Trumpeter 5 (1988): 138-42 at p. 141.

growth and general environmental degradation. As to the former debate, an ecocentric emancipatory perspective would necessarily reject the Malthusian response and support the case for a more equitable pattern of control and distribution of resources among the world's existing human population alongside the development of more "appropriate" food sources and production methods. This is because an ecocentric perspective is concerned with human and nonhuman emancipation. As to the latter debate, however, the ecocentric position maintains that even if we assume that these social reforms would overcome the problem of hunger for the world's existing population (an assumption some scientists would now dispute), it would not alone solve the ecology crisis for the existing nonhuman community or for future generations of humans and nonhumans. As I explained in the previous chapter, environmental impact is a function not only of technology and affluence (i.e., level of consumption) but also absolute human numbers. Accordingly, pollution, habitat destruction, and species extinction would continue apace as more intensive agriculture and industry expanded to meets the needs of an expanding population. This is why we cannot afford to await the "demographic transition."

According to projections by the United Nations Population Division, the world's human population is expected to increase to 8.5 billion over the next 35 years (to 2025), and 95 percent of the projected increase of 3.2 billion is expected to occur in the less developed countries.[60] This raises pressing international equity issues that threaten global environmental integrity and security. From an ecocentric perspective, it demands that the first world redistributes resources to developing countries (to assist them in undergoing an ecologically benign demographic transition) while scaling down its own consumption of resources to a level that is compatible with global justice. But this alone is not enough. The ecocentric argument is that both human and nonhuman communities need space and a healthy and varied diet and environment in which to flourish; if this is accepted, then it is essential that we also address the problem of absolute human numbers through family planning in addition

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60. See Nathan Keyfitz, "The Growing Human Population," Scientific American, September 1989, pp. 71-77 at p. 71.

to technological and inter-human distributional questions. This is a nonanthropocentric population policy and it should not be confused (as democratic ecosocialists and social ecologists are prone to do) with a misanthropic or racist one. As Arne Naess and George Sessions state in their deep ecology platform: "The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease."[61] Indeed, Arne Naess argues that the "destruction of cultural diversity is partly the result of too many humans on earth" and that cultural diversity might therefore be enhanced if we move toward a long term reduction in the human population.[62]

From an ecocentric perspective, then, Bookchin's approach to the population question remains anthropocentric in not paying sufficient heed to the way in which growing absolute numbers of humans destroy the environmental conditions necessary for the flourishing of the nonhuman world. Bookchin, of course, has been highly critical of the notion of biocentrism on the ground that it implies the passive surrender of humans to the natural order, and that humans are no more valuable than a mosquito or the AIDS virus. I have argued in Chapter 2 and elsewhere that these criticisms are misplaced and do not intend to repeat them here.[63] It will suffice to reiterate that ecocentrism merely promotes a prima facie orientation of nonfavouritism or openness to other life-forms. Humans are just as entitled to live and blossom as any other species, and this inevitably necessitates some killing of, suffering by, and interference with, other species, particularly where such species threaten human life. The general

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61. Arne Naess, Ecology, Community and Lifestyle, trans. David Rothenberg (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 29.

62. Naess, "Sustainable Development," p. 140. Elsewhere, Naess has provocatively asked: "Are cultural diversity, development of the sciences and arts, and of course basic human needs not served by, let us say, 100 million?" (Naess, Ecology, Community and Lifestyle, p. 141). This, of course, is merely an arbitrary figure and should not be taken literally. Naess's point is simply that there is no reason to believe that there will be less cultural diversity with a long term human population target that is considerably lower than the present 5.3 billion people.

63. Eckersley, "Divining Evolution," see p. 114.

orientation, however, is "live simply that others may simply live." Expressed more positively, this means seeking a lifestyle that is "simple in means and rich in ends."[64]

In the above critique of social ecology, I have (i) criticized Bookchin's social hierarchy thesis and his claim that only an anarchist society is consistent with social and ecological harmony, and (ii) criticized Bookchin's evolutionary stewardship thesis as being unverifiable, self-serving, and anthropocentric in terms of the various ways in which it distinguishes and privileges "second nature" over "first nature." More generally, I have sought to show that Bookchin's goal to maximise freedom or self-directedness in general is best achieved by an ecocentric emancipatory perspective rather than by his own social ecology perspective. I conclude, then, that while social ecology is less anthropocentric than all of the emancipatory ecopolitical theories examined so far in this inquiry, it is not an ecocentric emancipatory ecopolitical theory. Rather, in terms of the anthropocentrism/nonanthropocentrism distinction, social ecology may be seen as offering an ecological humanism that stands somewhere between democratic ecosocialism and ecocommunalism.

The foregoing critique of Bookchin leaves two important questions unanswered: (i) although I have argued that an anarchist society, free of social hierarchy, is not the only kind of society that is consistent with social and ecological harmony, is anarchism nonetheless the most conducive political philosophy to the promotion of these ecocentric goals?; and (ii) are there other kinds of ecoanarchism that are consistent with an ecocentric perspective?

In the remainder of this chapter I examine the more general ecoanarchist tradition that I refer to as "ecocommunalism." I intend to show that while this tradition represents the only truly ecocentric emancipatory theory in the ecopolitical literature to date in terms of its ecophilosophical orientation, it is nonetheless in need of considerable political revision and reformulation if it is to meet the challenges of the closing 20th century and beyond.

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64. See Bill Devall, Simple in Means, Rich in Ends: Practicing Deep Ecology (Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, 1988).

Ecocommunalism

Ecocommunalism is a generic term that I use to refer to a diverse range of utopian, visionary, and essentially anarchist Green theories that seek the development of human scaled, co-operative communities that enable the rounded and mutualistic development of humans while at the same time respecting the integrity of the nonhuman world. Progress, according to ecocommunal theorists, is generally measured by the degree to which we are able to adapt human communities to ecosystems (rather than the other way around) and by the degree to which the full range of human needs (not just material needs) are fulfilled. As with Bookchin, these theorists are generally critical of purely instrumental valuations of the nonhuman world and instead appeal to nature as a source of both inspiration and guidance.

The idea of building stable communities in accordance with the "principles of nature" is not new. According to Robert Nisbet, since the fall of the Roman Empire, the idea of an "ecological community" has been an enduring theme in Western social philosophy. It began with the monastic orders founded by Saint Benedict of Nursia following the collapse of the Roman Empire and has continued through the Utopian tradition in political thought, from Sir Thomas More's Utopia in 1516 down to the communal longings of the 19th and 20th century anarchist philosophers (most notably William Godwin and the Russian Prince Kropotkin).[65] Writing in the early 1970s - well before the flowering of the Green movement and Green parties - Robert Nisbet defined the essence of the ecological community as

> ... peaceful, not concerned with capture and forced adaptation, noncoercive, and seeking fulfilment through example or vision rather than through revolutionary force and the centralization of power. The uncovering of those autonomous and free interdependencies among human beings which are believed to be natural to man and his morality: this - not the violent capture of government, army, and police - is the most fundamental aim of the tradition of community in Western social thought I call ecological.[66]

Nisbet defends his use of the adjective "ecological" to describe this tradition of thought on the grounds that (i) the Greek word oikos refers to the household, and by

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65. Robert Nisbet, The Social Philosophers: Community and Conflict in Western Thought (London: Heinemann, 1974), see p. 320.

66. Ibid., p. 320.

implication, "to the natural and harmonious interdependencies of the household economy," (ii) in post-Darwinian usage, ecology refers to the natural interdependencies among organisms and between organisms and their environment, and (iii) in recent times ecology has taken on a moral overtone concerned with protecting "natural" interdependencies as distinct from those which are artificial or contrived.[67] Nisbet's characterization is one that runs together the ideas of ecology as a science and ecology as philosophy of life; it thus provides a statement of what the natural order is like (if left to unfold according to its own "laws") as well as a statement of how it ought to be.

Nisbet identifies five characteristics of the ecological community. The first of these is the idea of nature serving as a regulative ideal. Nisbet uses the term nature here in the Greek sense of what is "the normal, inherent constitution or manner of growth of an entity in time," unimpeded by alien impact, accident, or human evil.[68] While he notes that many other political philosophers have employed the concept of nature as a justificatory aid (e.g., Plato, Aquinas, Rousseau, and Spencer) Nisbet claims that "its paramount and distinctive significance has been among the philosophers of the ecological community."[69]

Related to the idea of nature as a regulative ideal is the notion of the "web of life" - a profound sense of our "relationship with other beings in the kingdom of life and the necessity of maintaining this relationship, indeed of heightening it, through close contact with the land and all that grows on the land."[70] Humans were seen as part of a larger natural order that was divine, a conviction that was expressed in the Benedictine respect for the seasons and the soil and, more explicitly, in the sermons to birds, animals, the sun, and the moon given by Saint Francis of Assisi, the founder of the Franciscans (it is noteworthy that the historian Lynn White has proposed St

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67. Ibid.

68. Ibid., p. 322.

69. Ibid., p. 323.

70. Ibid., p. 324.

Francis as "a patron saint for ecologists").[71] Nisbet maintains that "whether religious or secular in premise, this conception carries with it a strong conviction of the inviolability of nature" together with a strong objection to "the evil desecrations and bootless exploitations of nature" by humans.[72] Associated with the idea of a harmonious balance in nature is the insistence on developing a harmonious balance between thought and labour, factory and field, mind and body, and culture and nature - themes that were particularly dear to the hearts of 19th century ecocommunal and utopian theorists such as Petr Kropotkin and William Morris.

A third feature of this tradition identified by Nisbet is a hostility to greed and competition and the fostering of community-based, co-operative modes of living and working. Co-operation or "mutual aid" (Kropotkin's oft-quoted phrase) was accepted as an essential part of the web of life and, according to Nisbet, the "highest ideal" of the ecological community.

Fourth, such communities were also to be free from arbitrary authority, coercion, or repressive law. Nisbet argues, however, that they were not, except in their naive form, without order or discipline. This principle of "autonomous association" was well illustrated in the Benedictine Rule where membership of the monastery was conditional upon the member's desire to remain part of the community. For so long as a person remained a member of the community, however, authority would be asserted (by the Abbott) in respect of errant members through the sparing applications of certain sanctions. Unlike Bookchin's social ecology, then, this tradition of the ecological community has countenanced certain localized forms of social hierarchy.

Finally, Nisbet has found in this tradition of ecological communities "a clear and unwavering emphasis upon simplicity." Hyperorganization and complexity were condemned as working against the ideal of harmonious balance between mind, body,

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71. Lynn White, Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis, Science 155 (1967): 1203-7 at p. 1207.

72. Nisbet, The Social Philosophers, p. 324.

and spirit: "Nature, it is said, is simple for those who understand; society should be also."[73]

These five elements identified by Nisbet - nature as a regulative ideal, a profound respect for the web of life, co-operation, autonomous association, and simplicity - in may ways capture the essence of what I have identified as the ecocommunal strand of emancipatory ecopolitical thought that has emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s. For example, all of these themes can (with varying degrees of emphasis and articulation) be found in the bioregionalism of Kirkpatrick Sale, the "small is beautiful" theme and "Buddhist economics" of Fritz Schumacher, the "Liberated Zones" of Rudolf Bahro's eco-fundamentalism, and in Theodore Roszak's theme of "person/planet," to name four significant contributors to this body of Green thought.[74] The most noteworthy feature of the modern incarnation of this tradition of "ecological community," however, is its general ecocentric orientation. Ecocommunalism sees humans as forming part of and respecting a larger (and to some, divine) order or process. It thus stands at odds with the general human-centred orientation of most modern political theory (particularly liberalism and Marxism), which, as we have seen, posits humans as the centre of meaning and value in the universe and regards everything else as background or mere means to the realization of human ends. Whereas liberalism and Marxism have generally regarded the domination of nature as the necessary price of human freedom, ecocommunal theorists argue that the cultivation of an attitude of respect for nature is a necessary aspect of human self-realization. A further notable feature of ecocommunalism is that its concern to develop local socio-economic arrangements that are geared toward the satisfaction and integration of the full range of human needs (that is, psychological, spiritual, intellectual, creative, and social needs, as well as material needs)

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73. Ibid., p. 326.

74. Kirkpatrick Sale, Dwellers in the Land: The Bioregional Vision (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1985); E. F. Schumacher, Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Really Mattered (London: Abacus, 1973); Rudolf Bahro, Building the Green Movement (London: Heretic/GMP, 1986); and Theodore Roszak, Person/Planet: The Creative Disintegration of Industrial Society (London: Paladin, 1981).

considerably blurs the Marxist and neo-Marxist distinction between freedom and necessity. True freedom or self-realization is not something that can only be experienced beyond "bread labour." Rather, freedom is a function of the extent to which an individual's entire range of needs are integrated and satisfied so that they may become self-determining beings. What liberals call negative freedom or "freedom from" (meaning the absence of constraints) is, for ecocommunal theorists, merely a condition for the realization of positive freedom or "freedom for," which is the rounded, mutual development or self-realization of the individual and ecocommunity.

Ecocommunalism, like the other currents of emancipatory ecopolitical thought examined in this inquiry, provides another means of integrating the four pillars of the Green movement (that is, ecology, social responsibility, grassroots democracy, and nonviolence). Where it differs from the various ecosocialist integrations of these principles is in its adoption of an ecocentric as distinct from an anthropocentric ecophilosophical perspective (this is most pronounced in bioregionalism), its greater emphasis on decentralization and local autonomy, and its emphasis of, or openness to, a "spiritual dimension" in a Green society. Beyond these general points, however, there is a considerable variety of approaches in the ecocommunal tradition, a fact that is to be expected in view of its emphasis on diversity and local autonomy.

The utopian and anarchist dimensions to ecocommunalism have made it vulnerable to criticisms that it is naive, voluntarist, simplistic, and blind toward certain recalcitrant aspects of human nature. These are serious obstacles to the widespread acceptance of ecocommunalism as an appropriate political framework for social and ecological renewal. Indeed, I argue below, inter alia, that ecocommunalism needs to be supplemented by engagement with state institutions if it is not to remain marginal. I also intend to show that the idea of nature as presented by some ecocommunal theorists is often anachronistic and/or idealized and in need of reformulation. This does not, however, invalidate the general orientation of this tradition and the importance of exemplary action. Indeed, despite the above

shortcomings, this tradition - when supplemented by engagement with state institutions - provides the necessary vision and the most appropriate cultural orientation for the kind of ecocentric political theory we are working toward in this inquiry.

Before exploring the general limitations associated with the utopian and anarchist character of this tradition, it will be helpful to introduce some modern examples of the types of human communities that ecocommunal theorists envisage will link together the themes discussed above. In the first case I discuss and explore the significance and implications of what I have found to be a recurring analogy used in ecocommunal argument, namely, the monastic paradigm. In the second case, I outline what is arguably the most distinctive and innovative body of ecocommunal thought - bioregionalism.

Monasticism Revisited

A common theme among ecocommunal theorists is the idea of disengagement or withdrawal from corrupt social and political institutions and the establishment of exemplary institutions and/or the pursuit of exemplary personal action. In view of the sweeping ecocommunal critique of most aspects of modern industrial society, such a strategy is, in many respects, the only reliable and authentic strategy that will maintain consistency between ends and means. In arguing for the establishment of ecological communities as the solution to the multifaceted crises facing modern society, a number of ecocommunal theorists have employed the analogy of the emergence of the medieval communalism of Saint Benedict of Nursia out of the ruins of the Roman Empire. This reference to the monastic paradigm as the nucleus for an ecological community is not just a recent phenomenon but can also be found in some strands of utopian socialism. William Morris, for example,

> ... wrote of setting up a brotherhood, a new monastic order for a "Crusade and Holy Warfare, against the age, 'the heartless coldness of the times.'" He read Thomas Carlyle's book, Past and Present (1843) - a glowing account of a twelfth century monastery - with eagerness.[75]

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75. Peter C. Gould, Early Green Politics: Back to Nature, Back to the Land, and Socialism in Britain 1880-1900 (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester, 1988), p. 17. See also

Indeed Morris's own medievalist and romantically inspired social and political thought possessed all the characteristics of the ecological community. He rejected what he called "utilitarian sham Socialism" (concerned merely with the organizational means for improving the material conditions of the working class) in favour of a community-based, "ethical socialism" that coexisted in harmony with nature, cultivated the "whole person," and restored the dignity and creativity of labour as craft. (It is noteworthy that the romantic and utopian character of Morris's socialism - particularly his utopian novel News From Nowhere - has generated a considerable debate as to whether he properly qualifies as a Marxist.[76])

In contemporary ecocommunal literature, references to the monastic paradigm abound. For example, the ideal of "withdrawal and renewal" is central to Rudolf Bahro's ecofundamentalism and he has often claimed that the establishment and growth of small-scale co-operatives or "Liberated Zones" (his ecocommunal solution to the ecological crisis) would lead society toward a better future in the same way that the communes founded by Saint Benedict were intended as a return to community and order after the chaos and social decay that had set in following the collapse of Rome.[77] Liberated Zones would ensure consistency between ends and means by providing both a supportive refuge from the destructiveness and alienation of industrialism and the nucleus of a new "biophile [i.e., life-loving] culture." Bahro is at pains to point out that the challenge of ecological degradation is primarily a

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E. P. Thompson, William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary (New York: Pantheon, 1976), pp. 27-32.

76. Ibid., p. 24. See William Morris, News From Nowhere and Selected Writings and Designs (Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1980). For a discussion of Morris's Marxist credentials, see the 1976 Postscript in Thompson, William Morris, pp. 763-819. On the popularity of News From Nowhere in West Germany, see Elim Papadakis, The Green Movement in West Germany (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 54-55.

77. See Rudolf Bahro, Building the Green Movement, especially pp. 86-98. Ecocommunalism is something Bahro has arrived at in his more recent work. In his earlier publications (for example, Socialism and Survival [London: Heretic/GMP, 1982] and From Red to Green [Verso/NLB, 1984]) Bahro's position was closer to democratic ecosocialism than ecocommunalism. For a general discussion of the trajectory of Bahro's thought since he left East Germany, see Robyn Eckersley, "The Prophet of Green Fundamentalism," review essay of Building the Green Movement, by Rudolf Bahro, The Ecologist 17 (1987): 120-22.

cultural and spiritual one and only secondarily an economic one. Accordingly we must direct our attention to cultural and spiritual renewal rather than structural or economic reform. Liberated Zones thus provide, in Bahro's view, a total solution to the multifaceted crises of modern times.

Similarly, Gilbert LaFreniere looks to the monastic paradigm as a model for intentional ecocommunities. Such quasi-monastic communities or "ecosteries" would provide a personal and local anchor in a world of uncertainty and cultural transition:

> Such communities, which we might call ecosteries on the basis of their debt to ecological principles and the utopian model of the Christian monastery, may furnish the future steady state society with the same guidance that monasteries of the Dark Ages provided to the rising medieval culture of Western Europe.[78]

Edward Goldsmith, a chief author of A Blueprint for Survival, has also drawn a parallel between the Fall of the Roman Empire and what he sees as the impending collapse of industrial society, although he argues that in modern times the rate of collapse will be a faster and more cataclysmic event.[79] Goldsmith argues that in both cases the collapse is "the cost of violating in so radical a manner the basic laws of social and ecological organization."[80] Instead of suggesting the formation of ecomonasteries as exemplary communities, however, Goldsmith is more ambitious in arguing for widespread, state sponsored societal change. For example, he argues for economic and demographic contraction and the organization of society into relatively closed, self-regulating family and community systems in accordance with what he calls the "Hierarchical co-operation principle" (where behaviour satisfies the needs of

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78. Gilbert F. LaFreniere, "World Views and Environmental Ethics," Environmental Review 9 (1985): 307-22 at p. 319. LaFreniere's ideas have been incorporated in a proposal to form a nonprofit Ecostery Foundation of North America to acquire and administer large parcels of rural land and small parcels of urban land as centers for the promotion of "environmental research and education, [the] restoration and preservation of land ... [and] the cooperative cultivation of ecological wisdom and harmony." See Alan Drengson, "The Ecostery Foundation of North America (T.E.F.N.A.) - Statement of Philosophy." 1989, ms., p. 1.

79. Edward Goldsmith, "The Fall of the Roman Empire: A Social and Ecological Interpretation," The Ecologist 5 (1975): 196-206. This is reprinted in Goldsmith, The Great U-Turn: De-industrializing Society (Hartland, Bideford: Green Books, 1988), pp. 3-29.

80. Edward Goldsmith, "De-industrializing Society," in The Great U-Turn, pp. 183-217 at p. 206. Goldsmith's particular characterization of these "laws" is set forth in "The Way: An Ecological World-view," The Ecologist 18 (1988): 160-85.

both the parts and the whole in a self-regulating system).[81] In the long term, Goldsmith argues that the family and the community must take over the functions of the state so that social and ecological problems are dealt with at the lowest level possible (on the ground that this would stop such problems being "exported" elsewhere). Humanism would be replaced with naturalism, individualism with communitarianism, materialism with modesty, scientism with culturalism, technologism with respect for nature, institutionalism with self-regulation, and economism with ecologism.

It should be noted, however, that there are some paternalistic features of Goldsmith's particular solution that put him at odds with the ecoanarchist tradition and more in the company of the authoritarian survivalist ecopolitical theorists discussed in Chapter 1. Despite his emphasis on the devolution of power, Goldsmith envisages that the move toward the Gandhian ideal of "village republics" would be instituted and supervised by the nation state.[82] His "self-regulating" communities would thus be established "from above" rather than left to emerge organically "from below." Moreover, it is unclear to what extent Goldsmith would be willing to condone the use of the full force of the state to coerce recalcitrant people to move toward village republics (and here the Tanzanian villagization experiment provides a sobering reminder of how seemingly worthy ideals can prove to be disastrous in practice). In contrast, the other ecoanarchists examined here are consistent in terms of ends and means, preferring exemplary and voluntary local action rather than state enforced change.

However, it is Theodore Roszak in his book Person/Planet who has presented the fullest defence of ecomonasticism as a solution to the contemporary crisis. Roszak argues that monasticism (he does not confine his attention to the

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81. Goldsmith, "De-industrializing Society," see pp. 193 and 203.

82. Goldsmith, "De-industrializing Society," pp. 204 and 208. Other nonlibertarian measures recommended by Goldsmith include support for the use of advertising techniques to "convert" people to pursuing less wasteful patterns of consumption and a proposal to enrol unemployed people in a "Restoration Corps," and, after graduation from that, a Civil Militia along the Swiss model, which would enhance local patriotism!

Benedictine example) provides "a model, a tested, historical paradigm of creative social disintegration" where a "vital, new sense of human identity and destiny could take root."[83] According to Roszak, this tradition has shown that it is possible to create relatively self-sufficient and stable domestic economies from very small and humble beginnings. Moreover, it is a tradition that fosters a community that is "simple in means and rich in ends," provides an economics of permanence, offers egalitarian fellowship, and is able to synthesize qualities that have become polarized in modern life such as the personal/social and the practical/spiritual. In Roszak's view, most modern political ideologies have overlooked the spiritual and personal dimension of human experience:

> If the socialist and communist ideologies of our time had not opted to become so fanatically anti-religious in orientation, they might have learned a great truth from the communitarian experience of the monasteries. They might have come to see conviviality, not as a difficult social duty that must be strenuously inculcated upon us as a matter of class consciousness (an approach that only produces mass movements), but as a culminating relationship between free and unique persons. They might have come to respect the existence of a personal reference which supports, but also delimits, the claims of the collective will.[84]

According to Roszak, of the modern political ideologies, the ideals of Maoist communism come closest to the monastic ideal, with its emphasis on agrarian communalism, social service, and the balancing of intellectual and manual labour. What was lacking in Maoism, however, was the personal and spiritual motivation that was so central to the monastic tradition - a motivation that Roszak believes was replaced by a crude political propaganda that tapped and encouraged "the belligerence of patriotic pride, the appetite for vicarious collective power, competitive material standards of national production, constant agitational appeals to comradely duty that draw their force from the people's guilt and fear."[85] The thoroughgoing secularisation of Maoist communism meant than Mao's humble agrarian ideals were soon overshadowed by the exhortations of his own propaganda to build a "Great Power" in the world - a goal that demanded the ongoing sacrifice of the needs of the

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83. Roszak, Person/Planet, pp. 298-99.

84. Ibid., p. 301.

85. Ibid., p. 302.

individual in favour of the collective will. In Roszak's view, it was but a short step from here to the introduction of technocratic planning methods and large scale industrialization. In monasteries, on the other hand, "the cause of justice is no longer grounded in the myth of progress."[86] Rather, economic activity is conducted on a sustainable basis for the satisfaction of basic needs. Moreover, the modern distinction between work and leisure has little relevance in monasteries since personal fulfilment and a sense of the sacred were found as much within work as outside it. The monastic paradigm, argues Roszak, offers "liberation from waste and busywork, from excessive appetite and anxious competition that allows one to get on with the essential business of life, which is to work out one's salvation with diligence."[87]

Roszak sees the humble beginnings of a modern revival of the ecological community in the decentralist socialist tradition, in E. F. Schumacher's economics of permanence, and in the goals of ecological activists and the personal growth movement. He welcomes a proliferation of designs and experiments for shared and simplified living that are contemporary trial-and-error adaptations of the monastic paradigm, which may hopefully give rise to the "creative disintegration" of modern industrialism. Roszak has no illusions, however, about the likelihood of its immediate or general appeal in modern society. "But then," he observes, "cultural creativity is always the province of minorities."[88]

The ecomonastic paradigm, then, provides one kind of holistic solution to the social and ecological problems of the modern world in that it offers a lifestyle that integrates work and leisure, the personal and the political, and the mundane and the sacred. As an ideal, it fulfils the aspirations of ecocentric emancipatory theory insofar as it offers the space for metaphysical reconstruction and cultural, moral, spiritual, political, and ecological renewal. It does this by providing a concrete model of a steady state society that is cognizant of the needs of other life-forms but which

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86. Ibid., p. 309.

87. Ibid., p. 306.

88. Ibid., p. 312.

nonetheless enables the rounded development of human beings in a co-operative community setting.

Before leaving this model, it is instructive to contrast the support for the monastic ideal given by ecocommunal theorists with Andre Gorz's dismissal of this kind of model - a dismissal that highlights, among other things, the more secular and pragmatic orientation of ecosocialist theorists. Gorz argues that the sanctification of daily activities and the supposed unity of what he calls the spheres of heteronomy and autonomy in monastic communities are more apparent than real. In Gorz's view, this is because the realm of "necessary labour" is sublimated by the transformation of external constraints into internal obligations, a sublimation that is mediated by the religious experience.[89] This, argues Gorz, usually takes the form of submission to a spiritual or communal leader who is able "to demand and obtain submission to necessity as a submission to their own person. The leader enunciates the law, which is also duty."[90] Gorz argues that only a state and an objective system of law makes "it possible to confine objective necessities and obligations to a clearly circumscribed area, and thus to open up a space for autonomy entirely free of their imperatives."[91] According to Gorz, the only enduring type of commune is that which manages to separate these two spheres, such as the Israeli kibbutzim.

It is not necessary to endorse Gorz's rigid separation between socially necessary labour and autonomous activity to acknowledge the well-known dangers that can arise with charismatic leaders, religious or otherwise. Indeed, many supporters of ecomonasticism are alive to these dangers and are critical of the idea of blind personal allegiance to a particular leader and instead envisage that appropriate behaviour would stem from what might be called a shared ecocommunal ethos and from mutual self-development (i.e., beyond egoism). Roszak, in particular,

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89. Andre Gorz, Farewell to the Working Class (London: Pluto Press, 1982), pp. 108-10.

90. Ibid., p. 111.

91. Ibid.

repeatedly emphasizes the importance of the person, of individual reflection, and of free association as opposed to blind obedience or the surrender of critical judgement.

As I argued in Chapter 6, Gorz's ecosocialism is premised on a notion of human autonomy lying beyond bread labour, a notion that I have already criticized as encouraging the technological domination of nature so as to minimise socially necessary labour. Moreover, I also argued that the question as to what is "socially necessary production" and how it might best be organized is not a simple technical question that can be left to administrators, as Gorz seems to believe. Ecocommunal theorists avoid this sharp distinction between the so-called "objective technical requirements of society" and the personal desires of its individual members and instead suggest (implicitly at least) a notion of positive freedom as the rounded development of the individual that requires a balance between thought and labour (mind and body), factory and field, reason and emotion, and culture and nonhuman nature. Unlike Gorz's approach, this model of human freedom encourages modest, small-scale (as distinct from large-scale, highly automated) technological "interventions" in ecosystems. As William Morris saw it, the point was not to reduce labour to a minimum but to reduce the boredom and alienation in labour to a minimum (in Morris's case, a promise that could be fulfilled by architecture and the decorative arts).[92]

Nonetheless, Gorz does raise familiar classical arguments in favour of the State as an impartial protector and guarantor of individual liberty - arguments that provide a counterpoint to the ecocommunal reliance on voluntary co-operation and community censure. None of the above ecocommunal theorists satisfactorily address the mechanisms by which recalcitrant community members may be dealt with or the dangers of parochialism and personal affiliation that can often infect the dispensation of "popular" justice. In particular, they have yet to demonstrate how anarchist forms of social control (i.e., non-institutionalized community censure and coercion,

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92. See Ruth Levitas, "Marxism, Romanticism and Utopia: Ernst Bloch and William Morris," Radical Philosophy (Spring 1989): 27-36 at p. 30. In this respect, Morris remains true to that aspect of Marx that saw self-realization as attainable through unalienated labour rather than beyond necessary labour.

violence, or self-defence) would necessarily be superior to, or at least no worse than, those employed by the modern state (i.e., publicly legitimated institutionalized "coercion" and protection). Nor do ecocommunal theorists satisfactorily address the matters of inter-regional justice and the problem of disparities in resource endowment between local ecocommunities. I will return to these matters below after outlining the distinctive contribution of bioregionalism.

Bioregionalism

Although the exact source of the neologism "bioregionalism" (etymologically, bioregion means "life-place") is a matter of some uncertainty, its popularization as a unifying principle celebrating cultural and biological diversity and providing an ecological politics of living-in-place is generally traced to Peter Berg and Raymond Dasmann of the San Francisco Planet Drum Foundation.[93] The term bioregion, according to Berg and Dasmann, "refers both to a geographical terrain and a terrain of consciousness - to a place and the ideas that have developed about how to live in that place."[94] Geographically, bioregions are areas having common characteristics such as geological formations, soils, watersheds, climate, native plants and animals, and the human settlements and cultures to which these characteristics have given rise. Culturally and psychologically, bioregionalism seeks the integration of human communities with the nonhuman world "at the level of the particular ecosystem and employs for its cognition a body of metaphors drawn from and structured in relation to that ecosystem."[95] This goal of adapting human communities to the local bioregion is facilitated through the practice of "reinhabitation":

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93. Peter Berg and Raymond F. Dasmann, "Reinhabiting California," in Reinhabiting a Separate Country: A Bioregional Anthology of Northern California, ed. Peter Berg (San Francisco: Planet Drum Foundation, 1978), pp. 217-20. For a discussion of the possible origins of the term, see James J. Parsons, "On 'Bioregionalism' and 'Watershed' Consciousness," The Professional Geographer 37 (1985): 1-6 at p. 4.

94. Berg and Dasmann, "Reinhabiting California," p. 218.

95. Morris Berman, The Reenchantment of the World (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981), p. 294.

> Reinhabitation means learning to live-in-place in an area that has been disrupted and injured through past exploitation. It involves becoming native to a place through becoming aware of the particular ecological relationships that operate within and around it. It means understanding activities and evolving social behavior that will enrich the life of that place, restore its life-supporting systems, and establish an ecologically and socially sustainable pattern of existence within it. Simply stated it involves becoming fully alive in and with a place. It involves applying for membership in a biotic community and ceasing to be its exploiter.[96]

Bioregionalism is principally a North American phenomenon that has grown into a significant tributary of the North American Green movement.[97] In addition to Berg and Dasmann, its principal theorists include Gary Snyder, Kirkpatrick Sale, Ernest Callenbach, David Haenke, Jim Dodge, Morris Berman, and Brian Tokar.[98] Interestingly, too, it enjoys the general support of proponents of both social ecology and deep/transpersonal ecology - a point that underscores the broad commonality between these two schools, at least in the period before Bookchin's critique of deep ecology had been delivered.[99] Consistent with the tradition of the ecological community, bioregionalism emphasizes decentralization, human scale communities, cultural and biological diversity, relative self-sufficiency, and co-operation and community responsibility (both social and biotic). In differs from ecomonasticism mainly in its greater emphasis on protecting, and rehabilitating if necessary, the

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96. Berg and Dasmann, "Reinhabiting California," pp. 217-18.

97. It has spawned a plethora of local bioregional groups that come together to share information in what have become biennial North American Bioregional Congresses (so far, three have been held - in 1984 in Missouri, in 1986 in Michigan, and 1988 in British Columbia).

98. See, for example, Peter Berg, "Devolving Beyond Global Monoculture," CoEvolution Quarterly, Winter 1981, pp. 24-28; Gary Snyder, Turtle Island (New York: New Directions, 1969); Snyder, "Reinhabitation," in The Old Ways (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1977), pp. 57-66; Snyder, "The Plowboy Interview with Gary Snyder: Choosing Your Place - and Making a Stand!" The Mother Earth News, September-October 1984, pp. 17-20 at pp. 22 and 24; Kirkpatrick Sale, Dwellers in the Land; Sale, "Bioregionalism - A New Way to Treat the Land," The Ecologist 14 (1984): 167-73; Ernest Callenbach, Ecotopia (London: Pluto Press, 1978); David Haenke, Ecological Politics and Bioregionalism (Drury, M. O.: New Life Farm, 1984); Jim Dodge, "Living by Life: Some Bioregional Theory and Practice," The CoEvolution Quarterly, Winter 1981, pp. 6-12; Morris Berman, The Reenchantment of the World; and Brian Tokar, The Green Alternative: Creating an Ecological Future (San Pedro, California: R & E Miles, 1987).

99. See, for example, Bill Devall and George Sessions, Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered (Layton, Utah: Gibbs M. Smith, 1985), pp. 21-24, and Murray Bookchin, "A Letter of Support," in North American Bioregional Congress Proceedings, May 21-25 1984 (Drury, MO: New Life Farm, 1984), pp. 77-78.

characteristic diversity of native ecosystems. This is manifested in its concern to develop a sense of rootedness that is, as Morris Berman put it, "biotic, not merely ethnic."[100] (Ecomonasticism, on the other hand, has a more pastoral flavour and focuses less on natural history and more on the ideas of personal growth, social co-operation, and spiritual renewal, albeit within an ecologically benign setting. These, of course, are differences in emphasis only.) To the extent that political forms are discussed by bioregional theorists (many have just been concerned to explore innovative ways of cultivating a bioregional consciousness), the tendency is to promote as a long term goal a patchwork of anarchist polities linked together by networking and information exchange rather than through a formal state apparatus. In this respect, the general bioregional response to global problems is encapsulated in the idea of "saving the whole by saving the parts" - the parts, of course, being bioregions.[101]

In terms of general orientation, bioregionalism is undoubtedly the most ecocentric of all the emancipatory currents of ecopolitical thought examined in this inquiry. Indeed, as Don Alexander observes, it may be seen as the regional fulfilment of Aldo Leopold's land ethic insofar as it sees humanity as a "plain member" rather than conqueror of the biotic community.[102] This nonanthropocentric stance is much more emphatic in bioregionalism than in ecomonasticism and much more so than in social ecology (notwithstanding Bookchin's earlier support of bioregionalism). However, I intend to show that the political forms suggested by some bioregional theorists are neither the only nor necessarily the best political forms for facilitating the realization of ecocentric goals, although they are broadly compatible with ecocentric goals. In the following discussion, I focus on the work of Kirkpatrick Sale not only because he is a leading bioregional theorist but also because he has had the

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100. Berman, The Reenchantment of the World, p. 294.

101. Peter Berg, "Growing a Bioregional Politics," RAIN, July-August 1985, pp. 14-16 at p. 14.

102. Don Alexander, "Bioregionalism: Pseudo-Science or Sensibility?" 1989, ms, p. 2.

most to say about political structures. In this respect, it must be borne in mind that much of the bioregional literature is poetic, inspirational, and visionary and more concerned with cultivating a bioregional consciousness than with presenting detailed political analysis.

Kirkpatrick Sale articulates the view of most bioregionalists in arguing that self-government by the various human communities within a bioregion - possibly linked by a bioregional confederation - offers the best guarantee of social and ecological harmony. (A confederation is a mutual association of many autonomous communities or states, each of which retains sovereignty. It should not be confused with a federation, which is a mutual association of semi-autonomous states or provinces under one, central sovereign state.[103]) According to Sale, the task of linking communities via a confederation would not be difficult:

> We start, after all, with a clear identity of interest among these communities, a clear understanding of how they are interwoven into the bioregional tapestry, a clear historical record of their mutual needs and responsibilities and what happens when those are ignored. A confederation within bioregional limits has the logic, the force, of coherence and commonality; a confederation beyond those limits does not. Any larger political form [such as the nation state] is not only superfluous, it stands every chance of being downright dangerous, particularly in that it is no longer organically grounded in an ecological identity or limited by the constraints of homogeneous communities.[104]

Yet Sale also argues that the bioregional emphasis on diversity is such that it does not ultimately matter what political forms are chosen within a particular bioregion - indeed, it is to be expected that not every bioregion will follow the American liberal tradition - provided they serve bioregional principles, namely, human scale, conservation and stability, self-sufficiency and co-operation, decentralization, and diversity.[105] Nonetheless, he suggests that these bioregional principles would generally (though not always) impel the "polity in the direction of libertarian,

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103. In a federation, political power is divided between the component states and a federal government under a federal constitution; moreover, the federal government can enact laws within its purview that apply directly to the citizens in the component states. See Roger Scruton, A Dictionary of Political Thought (London: Pan Books, 1982), pp. 86 and 170.

104. Sale, Dwellers in the Land, p. 96.

105. Ibid., see p. 108.

noncoercive, open, and more or less democratic governance."[106] Elsewhere, he has described these political principals as being "grounded in the dictates presented by Nature."[107]

On the positive side, the idea that political decision making communities should be based on bioregional contours has much to commend it - particularly in relation to land and water management (indeed, many existing management regimes for internal waters are already modelled along watershed lines). From an educational perspective, bioregionalism plays an invaluable role in underscoring the importance of thinking in terms of ecological relationships, asking where everything comes from and where everything goes, learning to identify, and become "respectful neighbours" with, the local species of flora and fauna. Such an orientation and understanding is crucial to the critical evaluation of existing development decisions. Indeed, some bioregionalists have suggested the formation of "ad hoc watershed shadow governments. Their function would be to serve as moral stewards for specific watersheds and bioregions and to help inhabitants learn the true ecological cost of any proposed development."[108]

At the more practical level, however, bioregionalism is confronted with the problem that linguistic, religious, and cultural boundaries do not necessarily follow bioregional lines. As Don Alexander argues, it is too simplistic to locate human communities on the basis of geography alone.[109] While the patterns of human settlement and movement and the cultures of many traditional societies have tended to be influenced quite strongly by geographical criteria, modern transport and communications have meant that regional consciousness in Western society is determined as much by functional (and, as already noted, linguistic, religious, and

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106. Ibid.

107. Sale, "Bioregionalism - A New Way to Treat the Land," p. 170.

108. Michael Helm, "Bioregional Planning," RAIN, October-November 1983, pp. 22-23, p. 23.

109. Alexander, "Bioregionalism," see p. 7.

cultural) criteria than formal geographical criteria.[110] This seriously challenges the basic assumption on which Sale's entire discussion of political forms is premised, namely, that there is a "clear identity of interest" among the various communities within a bioregion, that they are relatively homogeneous and organically bound together by an ecological identity. What bioregional theorists should ask when considering the issue of institutional design is this: what political forms will best promote bioregional goals given that the many and varied communities within the many and varied bioregions of the world (however determined - another vexed question) do not all possess a bioregional consciousness? Ceding complete political autonomy to the existing local communities that inhabit bioregions will provide no guarantee that development will be ecologically benign or co-operative. Nor will it provide any guarantee that they will form a confederation with neighbouring local communities in their bioregion so as to enable proper bioregional management.

While the goals of bioregional theorists are admirable, then, their discussion of political forms is based on starting assumptions that are politically naive. Yet any revision of these assumptions raises the question as to whether an anarchist polity is indeed the best kind of polity to ensure the realization of bioregional goals, at least in the short and intermediate term. In any event, the flexible notion of bioregions is such that they can vary enormously in size, from the simple ecosystem of a puddle to the earth, depending on the scale and criteria used.[111] In these and other respects, bioregionalism shares many of the tensions and problems to be found in the general ecoanarchist tradition of which it forms part. In my evaluation of ecoanarchism below, I suggest that a multi-layered democratic decision making structure such as federalism might be more conducive to realizing ecocentric goals than the simple horizontal decision making structure of anarchism insofar as it acknowledges the multi-layered nature of social and ecological problems and does not presume a shared social and ecological identity.

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110. Ibid., see p. 18.

111. Alexander, "Bioregionalism," see p. 10.

Does Ecocentrism Demand Ecoanarchism?: A Critical Evaluation

Despite the important differences between social ecology and ecocommunalism (of which ecomonasticism and bioregionalism are tributaries), both seek to dismantle or by-pass the modern nation state and establish decentralized, autonomous, and human scaled communities. For social ecology and bioregionalism, ceding complete political and economic autonomy to such communities is considered the best means of reintegrating human communities into the natural world of which they are part. Ecomonasticism, on the other hand, is less concerned with general political forms and more concerned with planting seeds of cultural renewal through the establishment of exemplary intentional ecocommunities that co-exist within mainstream society. In this final section, I intend to assess the ecoanarchist case in the light of the ecocentric goals of social and ecological emancipation. There are several aspects of ecoanarchism that warrant closer scrutiny. First, how realistic are ecoanarchist assumptions concerning human nature? Second, is decentralization, maximum local democracy, and human scale the only or best means for realizing social and ecological emancipation in the context of the modern world? Finally, how ecologically informed is the ecoanarchist theoretical model of human freedom? How does it compare to the ecocentric model of freedom outlined in Chapter 2? Each of these questions will be addressed in turn. (A discussion of the relevance of the ecosocialist critique of ecoanarchism to the development of an ecocentric political theory will be reserved for the Conclusion to this inquiry.)

(i) Are Humans "Essentially" Co-operative?

Ecoanarchists argue that decentralization, local democracy, and human scaled institutions maximise opportunities for co-operative self-management. Social ecologists and bioregionalists, in particular, are suspicious of any form of hierarchical social or political arrangement, which they see as thwarting the otherwise spontaneous human impulse to co-operate. In terms of spatial metaphors, they contrast the vertical pyramid with the horizontal web and argue that only the latter is

in keeping with the mutualistic nature of ecological relationships. (Recall here Bookchin's libertarian model of society that is guided by his interpretation of the ecosystem: "the image of unity in diversity, spontaneity, and complementary relationships, free of all hierarchy and domination."[112]) As I noted in my discussion of social ecology, this kind of reasoning is not new to anarchism: indeed, ecoanarchism may be seen as the latest in a long series of attempts by anarchist philosophers to find a model of society in nature.[113] Peter Kropotkin's Mutual Aid is a seminal anarchist tract of this kind insofar as it emphasizes, in seeking to redress the Darwinian stress on competition, the "natural" tendency of animals (including humans) to engage in intra-species co-operation. Anarchists, as George Woodcock points out, do not all assert that humans are naturally good, but they do fervently assert that humans are naturally social.[114] Roszak goes considerably further in relation to what he calls the mystical anarchist tradition (which includes Tolstoy, Martin Buber, Walt Whitman, Thoreau, Gustav Landauer, and Paul Goodman):

> Anarchists of this stripe [and Roszak includes himself] ... find their way to a characteristic kind of mysticism, to a warm, intuitive trust in the essential goodness of God, nature and human community. They have known the darkness, but never despair.[115]

Unlike the individualistic freedom of liberalism, the freedom defended by ecoanarchism is a social rather than individual virtue that is secured by voluntary co-operation and responsibility to the "human scaled" community of which the individual is part.[116] The dismantling of the state would not lead to social fragmentation, they argue, but rather to spontaneous co-operation and the strengthening of social bonds between people. Anti-social behaviour would be dealt

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112. Bookchin, Ecology of Freedom, p. 352.

113. Woodcock, "Anarchism: A Historical Introduction," see p. 17.

114. Ibid., see p. 19.

115. Roszak, Person/Planet, p. 138

116. Koula Mellos's reading of Bookchin's ecoanarchism as a petit bourgeois form of radicalism based on solitary or "asocial individual self-sufficiency" seems to completely miss Bookchin's emphasis on symbiosis and community (see Koula Mellos, Perspectives on Ecology: A Critical Essay [London: Macmillan Press, 1988], Chapter 4).

with via community censure (as in traditional, small-scale hunting and gathering and horticultural groups) rather than via the abstract and inflexible legal rules laid down by a remote nation state.[117] Moreover, the anarchist assumption that humans are naturally co-operative, but are presently corrupted by hierarchical institutions, also stands in contrast to the classical liberal view, which saw humans as naturally self-seeking and in need of restraint through, say, a limited government based on a social contract. It was on the basis of this latter model of human behaviour that the survivalist ecopolitical theorists reached a conclusion that is diametrically opposed to that of ecoanarchists: that only a centralized, authoritarian government can rescue us from the ecological crisis and save us, as it were, from ourselves.

The ecoanarchists examined in this inquiry, then, share a deeply felt desire for humans to co-operate more than they do and a conviction that they can do so in the appropriate social environment. The problem with the ecoanarchist model of human nature, however, is that it conflates people's potential nature with their essential nature. That is, ecoanarchists present our potential nature as our essential nature and appeal to the reciprocity and mutual aid in nature (either implicitly or explicitly) as evidence that their model of human nature is in alignment with "the natural order of things" and perforce "objectively" right. I have already criticized this ecoanarchist appeal to the natural as adding nothing to the normative force of ecopolitical argument and do not intend to repeat these points here.[118] Here, I want to note the more obvious problems associated with such a model when it comes to rethinking political forms. Specifically, the presumption that humans are "essentially" of a certain nature (i.e., co-operative) and that this nature can be "re-awakened" under the right social and institutional circumstances (i.e., anarchism) leads to institutional designs that cannot adequately accommodate human behaviour that defies this model of human nature. A more agnostic approach that avoids this

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117. For an example of how community censure operates in traditional societies, see Harold Barclay, People Without Government (London: Kahn & Averill with Cienfuegos Press, 1982).

118. See Chapter 2 and Eckersley, "Divining Evolution."

kind of essentialism might be to say that the question as to whether humans are "inherently" good or bad (or co-operative or selfish) is meaningless and/or unknowable and to suggest that most, but not all, humans are more or less as "good" as the social and economic institutions of their particular society and culture generally encourages or allows them to be. This acknowledges the importance of social and economic institutions in influencing (as distinct from dictating) human behaviour while also recognizing the idiosyncrasies of individuals and the inevitability of varying degrees of "anti-social" and, occasionally, pathological behaviour in any community. This more agnostic approach thus remains open to the possibility that not everyone will respond to new institutions in the way that their designers might wish - a possibility that is likely to be enhanced if institutional change is rapid and/or pressured by crisis.

Where does this leave ecocentric emancipatory theory? As I argued in Chapter 1, all the emancipatory ecopolitical theorists examined in this inquiry reject the authoritarian solution proffered by the survivalists on the ground that it merely responds to, rather than seeks to challenge and transform, the culture of possessive individualism that characterizes market capitalism. Indeed, I have characterized emancipatory ecopolitical theorists by, inter alia, their concern to find a more lasting solution to the crisis by moving toward a culture of social co-operation and ecological responsibility.

However, ecocentric emancipatory theorists are confronted with a dilemma created by the urgency of ecological crisis. While they agree that long term cultural change will provide the most appropriate and lasting solution to the ecological crisis, they recognize that legislation can at least bring about an immediate response to the crisis. In view of the present rate of global ecological degradation, many threatened habitats, species, and tribal communities are unlikely to survive to see whether mutual aid and ecological restoration will indeed ensue from the ecoanarchists' strategy of withdrawing support from, or seeking to dismantle, hierarchical structures such as the nation state. The ecocentric concern to allow <u>all</u> beings (not just humans) to unfold in their own ways demands, at the very least, interim protection of biological and

cultural diversity. Such protection can be most effectively achieved by the introduction of state laws and sanctions restraining human conduct - measures that are anathema to ecoanarchists.

More importantly, however, ecoanarchists have not demonstrated that social emancipation (let alone ecological restoration) can only occur following the removal of, or the withdrawal of support from, "higher" forms of political authority. Ecosocialism provides a useful counterpoint here in arguing that a democratic state can act as an enabling institution that facilitates social emancipation by maintaining basic standards of income, health, education, and welfare, and by protecting basic freedoms via the rule of law. In this respect, democratic ecosocialists wish not to abandon but rather to fulfil the promise of parliamentary democracy. Yet Bookchin, for example, insists in his critique of Gorz's ecosocialism, that it must be centralization or decentralization, state or society, Marxism or libertarianism. But is the complete decentralization and devolution of power to the local community the most appropriate organizational means of realizing ecocentric emancipatory goals? Is it not the case that the more a society moves away from the centralized modern welfare state and toward decentralization and diversity, the more we might expect to find disparities in income and social services between communities? How can an anarchist polity mediate between, on the one hand, local interests, and on the other hand, regional and international interests?

(ii) The "Other Side" of Decentralization, Local Democracy, and Human Scale

The ecoanarchist case for decentralization, local democracy, and human scale institutions has been heralded by its supporters as the "third" way (i.e., beyond liberal parliamentary democracy and state socialism). Direct democracy at the community level is considered to be essential to the anarchist goals of personal and community empowerment and self-management. As we have seen, ecoanarchists (like all anarchists) argue that the breakdown of the hierarchical nation state and the ceding of power to local communities will enable face to face interaction and direct

political involvement in accordance with the ideal of the Athenian polis. Representative democracy, on the other hand, is seen to deliver "top down" decisions that are out of touch with the needs of the local community and therefore less likely to win local allegiance. The complete devolution of power is also seen to liberate what is believed to be a natural human instinct for co-operation as well as make possible self-sufficient and ecologically harmonious local economies. For social ecologists, a co-operative local polity of this kind will avoid the development of hierarchical/domineering sensibilities both between humans and between humans and the nonhuman world; for supporters of ecomonasticism, self-management will enable the reinvigoration of human community, social identity, and the growth of what Bahro has called a "biophile culture"; and for the bioregionalists, local democracy will enable the practice of reinhabitation.

The problem with this approach, as I pointed out in my discussion of bioregionalism, is that the general ecoanarchist approach of "leave it all to the locals who are affected" only makes sense when the locals possess an appropriate social and ecological consciousness. It also presumes that local bioregion A is not a matter of concern to people living in bioregion B and that these latter "outsiders" can have no effective input to development decisions made by the inhabitants of bioregion A. Moreover, the rejection of a vertical, representative, and more centralized model of democracy in favour of a horizontal, direct, and completely decentralized model underrates the innovative potential of what might be called the "cosmopolitan urban centre" vis-a-vis the "local rural periphery." For example, historically most progressive social and environmental legislative changes - ranging from affirmative action, humans rights protection, and homosexual law reform to the preservation of wilderness areas - have tended to emanate from more cosmopolitan central governments rather than provincial or local decision making bodies.[119] In many

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119. Stephen Rainbow has also criticized what he calls the "soft" Green, ultra-democratic approach for naively assuming that local people will always choose to attract ecologically sensitive industry. See Stephen Rainbow, "Eco-politics in Practice: Green Parties in New Zealand, Finland, and Sweden," Paper presented to the Ecopolitics IV Conference, University of Adelaide, South Australia, 21-24 September 1989, pp. 1-53 at p. 21.

instances, such reforms have been carried through by central governments in the face of opposition from the local community or region affected - a situation that has been the hallmark of many environmental battles in the Australian federal system of government.[120] At an even "higher" level, bodies such as the International Court of Justice and the World Heritage Committee are salutary reminders of the ways in which institutions created by international treaties can serve to protect both human rights and threatened species and ecosystems from the "excesses" of local political elites. Indeed, there is a large number of Green social and environmental reforms, ranging from the redistribution of resources from the developed to the developing countries to the abatement of the Greenhouse effect, that can only be effectively implemented via international agreement between nation states. Successful eco-diplomacy of this kind is more likely to be achieved by the retention and reform of a democratically accountable state that can legitimately claim to represent in the international arena at least a majority of people in a nation. While unilateral action by "right minded" citizens in local bioregions is to be encouraged, it will have minimal effect for as long as recalcitrant neighbouring local communities and regions continue to "externalize" their environmental costs. In view of the urgency and ubiquity of the ecological crisis, ultimately only a supra-regional perspective and multilateral action by nation states can bring about the kind of dramatic changes necessary to save the "global commons" in the short and medium term. It must be emphasized that none of these arguments are intended to deny the innovative potential of local and municipal action and the importance of enhancing local autonomy, nor the many obstacles facing international agreement. I am merely concerned to point out the two-edged nature of the argument for the complete devolution of political and legal power to

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120. The two most publicised of these battles are the World Heritage listings of the Franklin River in Tasmania and Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory. For a detailed analysis of the Franklin controversy, see M. Sornarajah, ed., The South West Dam Dispute: The Legal and Political Issues (Hobart: University of Tasmania, 1983). On the Kakadu controversy, see Clem Lloyd, "The Politics of Kakadu," in Environmental Politics in Australia and New Zealand, eds. Peter Hay, Robyn Eckersley, and Geoff Holloway (Hobart: Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, 1989), pp. 103-18.

local assemblies. We need not only to act locally and think globally, but also to act globally.

Decentralization can also be ecologically and socially problematic when pressed too far. Indeed, there are strong ecological arguments against complete decentralization in the terms of a more uniform distribution of the human settlement. As Robert Paehlke has argued, urban settlements are a less ecologically stressful and more energy efficient way of accommodating large numbers of people on the land than dispersing the human population more thinly and widely throughout existing wilderness and rural areas.[121] Cities also provide a cosmopolitan culture in contrast to the parochialism that can often be found in small rural communities. In criticizing the rural romantic current in the Green movement, Stephen Rainbow points out that

> ... while the urbanization accompanying industrialization has many negative side-effects it has also bred many social-emancipatory movements and facilitated a much more interesting life for many of the city's inhabitants than they might have enjoyed in the countryside. A simple rural romanticism is far too hard to sustain against the reality of history, and it is not the only basis upon which the Green desire for community can be built.[122]

While there are some strands of ecocommunalism that are vulnerable to these criticisms and while many ecoanarchists are critical of extensive urbanization and large cities (for example, Roszak), most ecoanarchists recognize the ecological and cultural advantages of cities.[123] Indeed, far from advocating the demise of cities as cultural and civic centres, bioregionalists and social ecologists advocate reinvigorating and greening cities and developing an urban "life-place" consciousness.[124] Peter Berg, for example, has developed a proposal for Green cities while Bookchin advocates the reinvigoration of city neighbourhood assemblies in his "New Municipal Agenda."[125] The ecocentric perspective defended in this inquiry is

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121. Robert Paehlke, Bucolic Myths: Towards a More Urbanist Environmentalism (Toronto: Centre for Urban and Community Studies, University of Toronto, 1986). See also Paehlke, Environmentalism and the Future of Progressive Politics (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), pp. 156-57 and 244-50.

122. Stephen Rainbow, "Eco-politics in Practice," p. 36.

123. For a provocative critique of the city, see Roszak, Person/Planet, Chapter 9.

124. Bookchin, The Rise of Urbanization.

more consistent with a diversity of human dwelling patterns (i.e., medium sized cities and decentralized communities) than with all of one or the other. This would be in a context of a lower human population and with less giant agglomerations.

Insisting too emphatically on decentralization, local political autonomy, and direct democracy can also compromise the ecocentric goal of social justice. I have already noted that the more we move away from the modern welfare state to local autonomy, the less we can expect to find the same levels of wealth, welfare and social services among different local communities. This is because there is no longer an effective central decision making forum able to redistribute resources between regions to overcome, say, inter-regional disparities in resource endowment, wealth, and public infrastructure or provide relief in times of hardship or disaster.[126] This has particular relevance to developing countries. Bioregionalists, for example, do not address the fact that not all bioregions are equally endowed with the resources that enable the satisfaction of basic human needs. To what extent do we allow migration, trade, or compensation to promote social equality on an inter-bioregional and international basis? Won't migration be likely to disrupt the bioregional goals of social cohesion and self-sufficiency and put a strain on the carrying capacity of the better endowed bioregions? Can we afford to depend on the ecoanarchist reliance on goodwill and voluntary networking to resolve these many tensions? In view of the centrality to ecocentrism of promoting a level of resource consumption that can be sustained for all humans and that is compatible with the flourishing of nonhuman communities, the ecosocialist case for an "enabling state" to facilitate this transition begins to appear much more robust than the ecoanarchist case for spontaneous co-operation and voluntary inter-regional networking.

An ecocentric perspective would seem to be more consonant with a decision making framework that can represent, address and resolve - or at least accommodate - social and cultural differences both within and across communities and regions. A

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125. Peter Berg, "The Bioregion and Ourselves II," Fourth World News 25 (1988): 8-9 & 11, see p. 8. Bookchin, The Rise of Urbanization, Chapter 8.

126. Robyn Eckersley, "Green Politics: A Practice in Search of a Theory?" Alternatives 15 (1988): 52-61, see p. 60.

multi-tiered, democratic political structure that follows the general principle of local control unless a good case can be made for the intervention of a "higher" tier of government at least has the advantage over anarchism of providing a better protection of interests beyond those of the local community and of providing for feedback and checks and balances in both directions. For example, a decentralized federalist framework or decentralized "municipal ecosocialism" operating under a national government would both allow for some measure of supra-regional (e.g., national, state/provincial) decision making that could, in certain circumstances, override the decisions of more local decision making bodies. This is not possible under confederalism since sovereignty is retained by the constituent units.

These two multi-tiered frameworks retain a considerable sympathy with anarchism insofar as they support a greater devolution of power from central to local assemblies to enable greater social and economic local autonomy and possibly community ownership of some means of production. In this respect, the case I am putting forward accepts that it is essential to avoid the concentration of economic and political power in centralized institutions. However, the solution to the problem should not be the simple transference of all the power wrested from the nation state to local communities for that merely results in a different kind of concentration of power. Rather, it should mean breaking down the concentration of power in the nation state and dispersing it between local communities and democratically accountable international bodies.

To recapitulate, then, ecoanarchism has not demonstrated that an anarchist polity is the only or best way to promote community empowerment or social equity or that it is the only or best way of restoring and protecting the environment. History has shown that some local communities can be just as socially and ecologically unsympathetic as some national governments. This underscores the virtues of dispersing political power between the centre and periphery (rather than concentrating political power in either the centre or periphery) in order to provide checks and balances in both directions. Moreover, a democratically accountable nation state (operating in the context of a relatively decentralized, multi-tiered governmental

framework) is much better placed than a large number of autonomous local governments to provide eco-diplomacy, interregional and international redistributive justice, and the protection of uniform human rights and freedoms via the rule of law.

In the following section I argue that a multi-tiered democratic political structure is also more compatible with an ecocentric world-view than the simple web-like, horizontal structure of anarchism insofar as it recognizes the layered interrelationships between parts (social and ecological) of larger wholes. In particular, it recognizes that the maintenance of "healthy" and diverse bioregions is not only a matter of concern to the people who inhabit them.

The Ecoanarchist Model of Freedom as Self-management

The ecoanarchist model of human freedom is encapsulated in the notion of political, economic, and social self-management. Ecoanarchist theorists generally see any kind of external or "other" directedness, as distinct from internal or "self" directedness, as encroaching on this fundamental norm. As we have seen, the kind of "self" that is to be managed in the ecoanarchist model of freedom-as-self-management is a co-operative, social self rather than the atomistic and self-seeking individual of classical liberalism. Selfhood, according to social ecology, means having the power, competence, and necessary social development to be a fully participating citizen in the polis; until such selves are minimally attained, argues Bookchin, self-management becomes a contradiction in terms.[127] If democratic socialism may be seen as pressing forward the liberal notion of freedom by insisting on political and economic democracy (both representative and direct), then anarchism may be seen as pressing forward this notion yet further by insisting on direct democracy in all spheres of life. Unlike democratic socialists, anarchists do not accept representative democracy or the delegation of political or economic power to any higher authority. While some

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127. Bookchin, "Self-Management and the New Technology," in Toward an Ecological Society, see pp. 118-21. Two important "educational instruments" for cultivating selfhood are direct action and participation in small affinity groups; the latter, in particular, is seen as facilitating the kind of mutual recognition of each other's competences that makes consensual rule possible.

anarchists accept the idea of larger political units beyond the local community, such as a confederation of self-managing communities, these larger units are to remain thoroughly subservient to the member communities. In Bookchin's words, "only if assemblies of the people, from city neighbourhoods to small towns, maintain the most demanding vigilance and scrutiny over any coordinating confederal bodies is a libertarian democracy conceivable."[128]

Likewise, bioregionalists and defenders of the ecomonastic paradigm defend the local, human scale community as the most appropriate locus of self-management, both politically and ecologically. While Sale acknowledges the importance of thinking globally, he argues that only by restricting the size of political decision making units to humanly scaled proportions can social and ecological problems be addressed in personal, local, and concrete ways. According to Sale, this is because "the human animal, being small and limited, has only a small view of the world and a limited comprehension of how to act within it."[129]

How ecologically informed is this ecoanarchist model of freedom? Is it compatible with the process oriented, ecological model of internal relations that informs ecocentrism? As we saw in Chapter 2, this ecological model emphasizes relationships rather than discrete entities. An individual human may be seen as one kind of relatively autonomous organism that is, like other entities, embedded in a myriad of multi-levelled relationships of many different kinds (in the case of humans, this includes physiological, psychological, social, and ecological relationships). The metaphor of a body is a useful way of conceiving of these relationships since the many and varied parts that constitute the whole (cells, organs, circulatory systems) themselves manifest both the dependent properties of parts and the independent properties of wholes. Moreover, these many relationships are intrinsically dynamic, nonlinear, and flexible in responding to feedback (within certain parameters) - often in unpredictable ways. In the light of this picture of ecological reality, we may

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128. Bookchin, "Theses on Libertarian Municipalism," p. 15.

129. Sale, Dwellers in the Land, p. 53.

conceive of ourselves as cells in the body of Gaia, forming part of larger wholes that themselves have unique properties and which form part of still larger wholes (ecosystems, ethnic and cultural groupings, states, geopolitical regions and so on).

According to Capra, nature has favoured systems that are characterized by stratified order since they have greater flexibility and resilience than nonstratified systems in the face of perturbations.[130] From the perspective of this dynamical systems view of life, neither the direct democracy of an anarchist polity nor a completely centralized bureaucratic state possess the flexible properties of stratified order. The simple web-like, horizontal decision making structure of anarchism, while flexible and responsive to the needs of local communities, has no built in recognition of the "self-management" interests of similar or larger social and ecological systems that lie beyond the local community. This is because a confederal body cannot proceed without the voluntary co-operation of its member units and cannot override the decisions of its member units; the latter are determining but not determined. The ecoanarchist insistence on the sovereignty of the local community can therefore only admit of differentiation of function and competence (and hence sovereignty) by individuals and groups within a local community, not beyond it. Of course, many ecoanarchists (particularly bioregionalists) subscribe to the ecological model of internal relations and seek the cultivation of an ecological consciousness; my point, however, is that this recognition is not adequately reflected in the organizational forms recommended by ecoanarchists. Conversely, the centralized bureaucratic state can purport to represent the interests of a larger social and ecological whole but its "top heavy" and "top down" hierarchical structure cannot respond flexibly to the special needs and interests of local communities. Such a concentration of power has the potential to lead to far-reaching domination.

What kinds of democratic political forms, then, are best suited to an ecocentric conception of reality? What is the most appropriate locus of self-management in the context of an interconnected world made up of many different

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130. Capra, The Turning Point, see pp. 303-4.

kinds of relatively autonomous autopoietic entities? Clearly, whatever social and ecological "whole" we identify as the locus of political self-management will always be partial insofar as there will always be other kinds of social and ecological "wholes" or communities with their own, somewhat different "interests" to be represented. This suggests the need for a layered and flexible decision making structure - with a two-way flow of information - to ensure that political and economic power is not excessively concentrated at any one level, whether "top" or "bottom." It means a greater dispersal of power both "down" and "up" in the sense of a simultaneous devolution of some areas of legal and fiscal power from the nation state to local communities as well as the ceding of other areas of legal and fiscal power from the nation state to international democratic forums. At present, the concentration of political power in the nation state not only gives rise to inflexibility toward the special needs of local communities but also gives rise to a limited, nationalistic notion of security that hampers international efforts (urged by many nongovernment organizations) toward ecological co-operation and a more equitable distribution of resources between developed and developing nations. Indeed, the growth in international environmental awareness is such that it is already possible to discern - particularly in Europe - a lessening of state power and national sovereignty brought about by the strengthening of local democracy, on the one hand, and greater regional and international co-operation and agreement brought about by the recognition of mutual ecological interests, on the other hand.

The two multi-tiered, democratic political structures discussed in the previous section - decentralized federalism and municipal ecosocialism - are more consistent with an ecocentric perspective than the horizontal structure of anarchism because they are able to represent different layers of social and ecological interests (local, national, regional, international) and provide an institutional means for resolving conflict. Both models are sympathetic toward anarchism in that they seek to promote local diversity and the dispersal of political and economic power while allowing - in ways that anarchism cannot - for regional integration, representative democracy, and the delegation of power beyond the local community. This is not an

abdication of the self-management prerogatives of the local community (as the anarchists might see it) since this model recognizes that the local community is not the only kind of community to be managed.

In terms of economic management, an ecocentric model is inconsistent with extensive state economic planning or a complete "command economy" since it seeks the dispersal of political and economic power in both state and private hands. It is, however, consistent with government intervention in the economy (whether local, provincial, or national) to break down the excessive concentration of market power or to ensure that the operation of the market does not compromise ecological integrity or social justice. Finally, an ecocentric model is consistent with a greater degree of local community ownership and control of the means of production as well as co-operative enterprises and worker self-management.

Before leaving this discussion of self-management, it is illuminating to contrast the ecoanarchist notion of the self that is to be politically managed or "realized" with the distinctive ecocentric philosophical model of self-realization advocated by transpersonal ecology. As we saw in Chapters 2 and 3, transpersonal ecology seeks the this-worldly cultivation of as expansive a sense of self as possible through the process of widening and deepening one's identification with all entities (human and nonhuman). Optimally, the larger, unfolding whole as well as the myriad of relatively autonomous parts are experienced as aspects of the Self that is to be realized or "managed." This wider sense of Self is "transpersonal" since it transcends, in the sense of including and going beyond, the personal, egoic sense of self as well as the local community of which the individual is part. Self-management under this notion of self means acting in a way that maximises the unfolding and flourishing of all entities rather than simply those in the local social and ecological community of which the individual is a member.

In discussing three different forms of identification - personal, ontological, and cosmological - that can lead to the experience of a wider sense of self, Fox concludes that cosmological identification is the best approach since it is easier to

communicate and grasp than ontologically based approaches and more impartial than personally based approaches. As Fox argues:

> ... emphasising a cosmological basis for identification means attempting to convey a lived sense that all entities (including ourselves) are relatively autonomous modes of a single, unfolding process; that all entities are leaves on the tree of life. A lived sense of this understanding means that we strive, insofar as it is within our power to do so, not to identify ourselves exclusively with our leaf (our personal, biographical self), our twig (our family), the leaves we are in close proximity to on other twigs (our friends), our minor subbranch (our community), our major subbranch (our race), our branch (our species), and so on, but rather to identify ourselves with the tree.[131]

According to Fox, cosmological identification provides an important corrective to the partiality and problems of attachment that are associated with personally based identification, which in practice "tends to mean that one identifies with my self first, my family next, my friends and more distant relations next, my ethnic grouping next, my species next, and so on."[132] Fox observes that partial, personally (including locally) based kinds of identification, while admirable in and of themselves, also have "far more to do with the cause of possessiveness, greed, exploitation, war, and ecological destruction than with the solution to these seemingly intractable problems."[133] This is not to say that there is anything wrong with personally based kinds of identification per se. Indeed, Fox acknowledges that personally based kinds of identification have a significant place in everyday life. From a transpersonal ecology perspective, however, personally based kinds of identification must take place in a larger cosmological context.

Fox's distinction between cosmologically-based and personally-based forms of identification enables us to see that the ecoanarchist sense of self tends more toward the personal, concrete, and local (the familiar branch, twigs, and leaves of the local community) rather than the larger, unfolding whole (i.e., the entire tree, including all of its branches, twigs, and leaves). As Bookchin has argued, "the living

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131. Warwick Fox, "The Meanings of 'Deep Ecology,'" Island Magazine, Autumn 1989, pp. 32-35 at p. 35.

132. Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 12. See also Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, Chapter 8.

133. Ibid., p. 414.

cell which forms the basic unit of political life is the municipality from which everything else must emerge: confederation, interdependence, citizenship, and freedom."[134] In contrast, there is nothing in the transpersonal ecology model of freedom as Self-realization that requires that political power reside exclusively in the local community at the expense of the needs of broader social and ecological aggregations. While transpersonal ecology would support a life-place politics of the kind advocated by bioregionalism, the self that is to realized or "managed" in this context includes yet goes beyond the local community to encompass the myriad of life-forms and entities that inhabit "Gaia." It is therefore quite consistent with the idea of local communities accepting in certain cases the decisions of units representing broader social and ecological communities in the name of furthering the interests of these larger wholes.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that a multi-tiered, democratic political decision making framework is more consistent (both theoretically and practically) with an ecocentric perspective than the political forms advocated by ecoanarchism. Of course, no democratic decision making framework can provide any guarantee of social and ecological outcomes that are consistent with an ecocentric perspective. In this respect, the ecoanarchist stress on ecological and cultural renewal, such as cultivating a bioregional consciousness, social responsibility, and spirit of civic participation, provide the crucial life-blood of a successful ecocentric polity (more about this in the Conclusion). Nonetheless, this chapter has been concerned to show, among other things, that some decision making frameworks are more conducive than others to the realization of ecocentric goals. In particular, I have argued that ecocentric emancipatory goals are more likely to be furthered by the retention and reform (rather than abolition) of the nation state. Significantly, although ecoanarchism is generally more ecocentric than democratic ecosocialism in terms of general orientation and sensibility, I have argued that the political forms defended by

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134. Bookchin, The Rise of Urbanization, p. 282.

democratic ecosocialists are more appropriate for the realization of ecocentric goals than those defended by ecoanarchists.

Chapter 8

Ecofeminism: What Does it Add?

Introduction

The women's movement and the ecology movement represent two of the most influential new social movements in modern times. For a growing number of Green theorists, the emergence of ecofeminism in the late 1970s represents a timely convergence of ecological and feminist concerns.[1] The principal objective of the ecofeminist project has been to explore the links between the domination of nonhuman nature and the oppression of women and to outline an emancipatory ecopolitical praxis based on a theoretical synthesis of feminist and ecological insights.

Unlike democratic ecosocialism and ecoanarchism, ecofeminism does not directly address the question of political forms, although its strong anti-hierarchical outlook makes it clear that it would have considerably more sympathy with the community self-management approach defended by ecoanarchism than the "enabling state" approach defended by democratic ecosocialism. Rather, the main contribution of ecofeminist theory has been to provide a philosophical, social, and psychological critique of the domination of women and the nonhuman world. In this chapter I examine and critically evaluate this contribution of ecofeminism to emancipatory ecopolitical theory. My main objectives are (i) to assess the various explanations that ecofeminist theorists have provided to account for the links between patriarchy and anthropocentrism, and (ii) find out to what extent, if any, ecofeminism is distinguishable from the ecocentric perspective defended in this inquiry (I say "to what extent" since it is clear that ecofeminism is seeking to develop a nonanthropocentric emancipatory theory).

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1. Although ecofeminism is generally discussed as a synthesis of the ecology and women's movements, it also has strong links with the peace movement. Indeed, for many ecofeminists, militarism is seen as one particularly extreme expression of the domination of nature. The main focus of this chapter, however, will be on the theoretical connection between feminism and ecology rather than militarism.

Ecofeminists have staked out a new political and theoretical terrain. In terms of political issues, ecofeminists have focused attention on the problematic relationship of women to science and technology (particularly the under-representation of women in science); the politics of women's health; the survival needs of women in developing countries; earth-based women's spirituality; the division of labour between the sexes; and, in relation to the population question, the issues of female infanticide, new reproductive technologies, and reproductive freedom.[2] Ecofeminists have also pointed to the growing number of women participating in grassroots environmental and disarmament campaigns, two noteworthy examples of the latter being the long-standing Greenham Common women's peace camp in the U. K. and the Women's Pentagon Action in the U. S. in 1980 and 1981.

At the theoretical level, the symbolic association of women with nature is taken by many ecofeminist theorists as demonstrating a special convergence of interest between feminism and ecology (although, as we shall see, not all feminists - and not all ecofeminists - welcome this association). The convergence is seen to arise, in part, from the fact that patriarchal culture has located women somewhere between men and the rest of nature on a conceptual hierarchy of being (i.e., God, Man, Woman, rest of Nature). Ecofeminists have also identified what they see as a similar logic of domination between the destruction of nonhuman nature and the oppression of women. Indeed, it is a central (and highly contentious) claim of many ecofeminists (writing mostly from a radical feminist perspective) that the logic of the human domination of nonhuman nature follows the logic of the male domination of women. According to this argument, patriarchy is identified as the source of both forms of domination. In the words of Ynestra King, the domination of women is "the prototype of other forms of domination" of which the domination of nature is but one

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2. See, for example, Leonie Caldecott and Stephanie Leland, eds., Reclaim the Earth: Women Speak Out for Life on Earth (London: Women's Press, 1983); Joan Rothschild, ed., Machina Ex Dea: Feminist Perspectives on Technology (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983); and Judith Plant, ed., Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism (Philadelphia: New Society, 1989).

example.[3] Finally, it is frequently claimed that women, by virtue of their reproductive capabilities and special bodily and social experiences, are the bearers of a special consciousness that is more attuned with an ecological world-view than the stereotypical "male" consciousness. Here, ecofeminists point to the parallels in the epistemology and metaphysics of radical feminism and radical ecology. Both are nonhierarchical, process oriented, and seek mutualistic social and ecological relationships based on a recognition of the interconnectedness, interdependence, and diversity of all phenomena.

It is these last two claims that have sparked the most controversy and debate - not only within ecofeminist and feminist circles but also between ecofeminists and theorists of the ecology and broader Green movements. In particular, the claim that patriarchy is the root cause of the domination of nonhuman nature forms the basis of a number of recent ecofeminist critiques of the deep ecology perspective.[4] The direct implication of this ecofeminist argument is that the principal focus of an emancipatory ecological praxis must be patriarchy rather than anthropocentrism.

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3. Ynestra King, "Toward an Ecological Feminism and a Feminist Ecology," in Rothschild, ed., Machina Ex Dea, pp. 118-29 at p. 119. King has also argued that "if male ecological scientists and social ecologists fail to deal with misogyny, the deepest manifestation of nature-hating in their own lives, they are not living the ecological lives or creating the ecological society they claim" (ibid., p. 123). While King endorses Murray Bookchin's thesis that domination and hierarchy in human society leads to the domination of nonhuman nature, she argues that it is misogyny that lies at the root of social (as distinct from nonhuman) oppression. See also Janet Biehl, "It's Deep, But is it Broad?: An Ecofeminist Looks at Deep Ecology," Special Supplement to Kick It Over, Winter 1987, pp. 2A-4A.

4. This is not the only kind of criticism that has been levelled against deep ecology by ecofeminists; it does, however, represent what both Michael Zimmerman and Warwick Fox have taken to be the essential, substantive charge against deep ecology. See Michael E. Zimmerman, "Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," Environmental Ethics 9 (1987): 21-44, and Warwick Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and it Parallels," Environmental Ethics 11 (1989): 5-25. For the charge that deep ecology is itself androcentric, see Jim Cheney, "Eco-feminism and Deep Ecology," Environmental Ethics 9 (1987): 115-45; for a reply to this particular charge, see Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," pp. 11-13. Contrary to what is implied in this ecofeminist argument, deep/transpersonal ecology theorists do not assert that anthropocentrism is the root cause of the ecological crisis since they are critical of reductionism. However, Fox distinguishes (in "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate") between social causation and social/philosophical legitimation and argues with respect to the latter that the unwarranted assumption of human self-importance is the most fundamental legitimating ideology underlying ecological domination.

Similarly, the related claim that women are the bearers of a special ecological consciousness suggests that women have a unique vantage point from which to critically evaluate existing ecological problems and develop an alternative ecological ethic. This last-mentioned claim provides a challenge to the nonsectional orientation of the wider Green movement by suggesting that women (rather than, say, citizens in general) are to be the "historic subject" that will usher in an ecological society. These various debates will be explored below. For the moment, it is important to note that not all ecofeminists have pursued these last two arguments and, of those who have, not all have pursued them in the same way and to the same political end. Indeed, given that there are many different kinds of feminism (e.g., liberal, Marxist, socialist, radical, existentialist, psychoanalytical, and postmodern), it is hardly surprising to find that there is more than one kind of ecofeminism, as we shall see below.

The political and theoretical issues introduced above have been examined from a wide range of perspectives and have generated a growing body of ecofeminist literature. Val Plumwood, in a useful critical review of this literature, has identified three main areas of theoretical inquiry that have sought to shed light on the parallels and links between the domination of nonhuman nature and the domination of women.[5] These are (i) the complex history of philosophical dualism (subject/object, mind/body, culture/nature, science/art, and reason/emotion) that has its origin in classical philosophy;[6] (ii) the "masculine" and mechanistic imagery associated with

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5. Val Plumwood, "Ecofeminism: An Overview and Discussion of Positions and Arguments," Australasian Journal of Philosophy 64 (1986): 120-38. Plumwood's article provides a much needed critical contribution to the ecofeminist literature and it has helped to inspire the analytical map of ecofeminism that I present below. Since drafting this chapter, I have discovered that Val Plumwood presented a broadly similar analytical approach to mine in Plumwood, "Women, Humanity and Nature," Radical Philosophy (Spring 1988): 16-24.

6. Two pioneering books on this aspect that are widely cited in the ecofeminist literature are Rosemary Radford Ruether, New Woman New Earth: Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation (New York: Seabury Press, 1975) and Elizabeth Dodson Gray, Green Paradise Lost (Wellesley, Massachusetts: Roundtable Press, 1981). It is important to note that this line of inquiry is not unique to ecofeminism but has been pursued by a wide range of ecophilosophers. The special contribution of ecofeminism, however, has been to focus on the fact that women are often associated with the inferior side of these dualistic categories.

the rise of modern science from the 16th century;[7] and (iii) the process of gender formation, that is, the different paths of psycho-sexual development experienced by men and women.[8] To this list I would add (iv) the changing division of labour wrought by the development of the market economy.[9] It is surprising to find that this fourth area of inquiry is the least examined area in the ecofeminist literature (hence its exclusion from Plumwood's list), although it would seem to have just as important a bearing on the contemporary nature of environmental destruction and the oppression of women as the other areas of inquiry listed above. For example, the specific division of labour under capitalism helps to account for the nature and scale of participation by men and women in environmentally destructive activities (i.e., with many more men in science and industry and many more women performing the role of consumer and householder).

Taken together, these different areas of inquiry (philosophical, psychological, and social and political) have helped to shed considerable light on the mutually reinforcing relationship between patriarchy and the domination of nature, although I will be arguing that no single avenue of inquiry has been able to demonstrate that there is a necessary link between these two forms of domination. Indeed, I intend to show that the theoretical explanations provided by some of these areas of ecofeminist inquiry have tended to undermine, or at least limit, the force and

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7. Carolyn Merchant, The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution (London: Wildwood House, 1982); Brian Easlea, Science and Sexual Oppression: Patriarchy's Confrontation with Woman and Nature (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1981); Joan Rothschild, ed., Machina Ex Dea; and Evelyn Fox Keller, Reflections on Gender and Science (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985). Again, these developments have also been explored by other environmental philosophers although usually not from a specifically feminist perspective. See, for example, William Leiss, The Domination of Nature (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974) and Fritjof Capra, The Turning Point: Science, Society, and the Rising Culture (London: Fontana, 1983).

8. Isaac D. Balbus, "A Neo-Hegelian, Feminist, Psychoanalytic Perspective on Ecology," Telos 52 (1982): 140-55; Balbus, Marxism and Domination: A Neo-Hegelian, Feminist, Psychoanalytical Theory of Sexual, Political and Technological Liberation (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); Keller, Reflections on Gender and Science; and Keller, "Women, Science, and Popular Mythology," in Machina Ex Dea: Feminist Perspectives on Technology, ed. Joan Rothschild (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983), pp. 130-46.

9. See, for example, Ruether, New Woman New Earth, Chapter 8.

applicability of other areas of ecofeminist inquiry. Moreover, while it has been shown that some of these developments (e.g., the rise of modern science and the development of commodity relations) have in many cases served to reinforce the domination of women and nonhuman nature, these developments have at the same time created new kinds of freedoms and opportunities for women (e.g., contraception, domestic labour saving devices, and new educational and employment opportunities). The two-sided nature of these developments has created a considerable divergence in feminist perspectives, particularly with regard to the role of science and technology. This divergence has largely turned on how feminist theorists have treated the supposed affinity between women and nature, that is, whether this affinity is rejected, embraced, or sought to be transcended.

In view of the centrality in ecofeminist theory of what I shall for convenience call "the ecofeminist problematic" (i.e., the idea that women are somehow closer to, or have a deeper affinity or keener sense of interrelatedness with, nonhuman nature than men), I have chosen this as the conceptual lens through which the literature will be examined. The following discussion will therefore address three general kinds of feminist response to the ecofeminist problematic. These responses turn on whether the affinity of women and nonhuman nature is (i) rejected (whether as a pernicious mythology or, at best, a distorted truth) on the grounds that it retards women's development as free subjects, (ii) embraced in a positive affirmation of the nonhuman world and of women's special connectedness with that world, or (iii) transcended in favour of a gender neutral model of the self that affirms both the nonhuman world and humanity's connectedness with that world.[10] In many respects, the major ecofeminist debate has been between those who wish to embrace the connection and those who wish to transcend it, since most of those who reject the

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10. Of course, most ecofeminists claim to support a philosophical perspective that transcends the dualistic thinking that is seen to lie behind the domination of women and nonhuman nature so that neither woman nor nonhuman nature is considered to be the Other. I argue, however, that whether ecofeminist theorists actually transcend such dualism is a function of the sorts of characteristics that imbue their ideal of what it means to be human, their attitude toward science and technology, the ways in which they evaluate the stereotypical qualities of the feminine and the masculine, and the ways in which they envision our relationship to the nonhuman world.

association do not see any special affinity between ecology and feminism (one important exceptions is Janet Biehl, as I note below). However, a discussion of this latter category is necessary since it poses a challenge to the whole ecofeminist theoretical enterprise.

Before outlining these positions, it should be borne in mind that what follows is merely a conceptual map that has been applied to the ecofeminist literature in order to clarify and critically evaluate the claims of ecofeminism from an ecocentric perspective. Its usefulness can be judged by the degree to which it sheds light on ecofeminist debates, highlights difficulties and inconsistencies in some of the arguments raised, and helps us to see some of the essential areas of difference in philosophical perspective within and across ecofeminist and wider Green circles. However, it should be remembered that these differences are not hard and fast; they merely represent different areas of emphasis, different leanings, and different practical preoccupations.

Rejecting the Feminine: The Body as Prison

Although the feminist existentialist Simone de Beauvoir was not an ecofeminist scholar, her observations on the relationship between woman, man, and nature in The Second Sex have been widely drawn upon by contemporary ecofeminist theorists of varying persuasions.[11] It is therefore somewhat ironic that de Beauvoir herself rejected the association of woman and nature on the ground that, historically, it has served to inhibit women's own process of becoming free, independent existents. I will therefore launch my discussion of the ecofeminist problematic by outlining de

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11. Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, trans. and ed. H. M. Parshley (Harmondsworth, U. K.: Penguin, 1982); de Beauvoir's use of the term "nature" is somewhat ambiguous in that it sometimes applies to the nonhuman world or "external nature" but more usually is intended to refer to the nonhuman world and that aspect of humanity that is biologically bounded. This reflects de Beauvoir's view of humans as partially natural or biological beings (embedded within nature) but mostly or essentially transcendent beings (able to rise above the natural "givens" of existence). This explains why de Beauvoir usually opposes culture to nature. Although I use the term "nature" in this inquiry to encompass "all that is" (i.e., the human and nonhuman world), the term will be used in de Beauvoir's (more usual) sense in the following discussion of de Beauvoir's ideas.

Beauvoir's position on the matter, since it (and similar accounts) serve as a useful counterpoint to the radical ecofeminist position that will be examined.

In her wide ranging exploration of the "second sex," de Beauvoir observed that women - like nonhuman animals - have usually been more preoccupied with the regeneration and repetition of life whereas men have usually been free to seek ways of transcending life by remodelling, reshaping, and recreating the future through technology and symbols. Whereas women's activity has usually been perishable, involving "lower level" transformations of nature, men's activity has usually been more lasting, involving major transformations of nature and culture. Woman's body and its functions have meant that she has been "more enslaved to the species than the male" and "her animality ... more manifest."

De Beauvoir has also described woman as "a wished for intermediary" between man and nature. According to the biblical myth, she was given to him "so that he might possess her and fertilize her as he owns and fertilizes the soil; and through her he makes all nature his realm."[12] Yet nature inspires ambivalent feelings in man:

> He exploits her, but she crushes him, he is born of her and dies in her; she is the source of his being and the realm that he subjugates to his will; Nature is a vein of gross material in which the soul is imprisoned, and she is the supreme reality; she is contingent and Idea, the finite and the whole; she is what opposes the Spirit and the Spirit itself ... Woman sums up nature as Mother, Wife, and Idea ...[13]

According to de Beauvoir, regarding woman as the Other has not only served the economic interests of man, it has also conformed to his "ontological and moral pretensions," that is, to man's desire to set himself up as "sovereign subject."[14] Woman's misfortune "is to have been biologically destined for the repetition of Life, when even in her own view Life does not carry within itself its reasons for being, reasons that are more important than the life itself."[15] That this should be seen as a

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12. de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, p. 183.

13. Ibid., pp. 176-77.

14. Ibid., p. 171.

15. Ibid., p. 96.

misfortune arises from de Beauvoir's existentialist philosophy. To be fully human is to take responsibility for one's own being and actively transcend the givens of existence through conscious and creative activity, through full participation in the realm of culture. In this respect, de Beauvoir accepts the idea that nature is but "a vein of gross material in which the soul is imprisoned."[16] Culture, on the other hand

> ... must be apprehended through the free action of a transcendence; that is, the free spirit with all its riches must project itself towards an empty heaven that it is to populate; but if a thousand persistent bonds hold it to earth, its surge is broken.[17]

Yet de Beauvoir observes that women need not always be tethered to the earth in this way since new technologies - particularly new forms of contraception and domestic labour saving devices - and new educational and employment opportunities for women have gradually eroded the contrast between women as confined, immanent, and enslaved to their bodies and men as free, creative, and transcendent subjects. As a result of these developments, the door is being increasingly opened for women to affirm their status as subject by becoming more active, productive, and creative. Women, argues de Beauvoir, now have a much greater opportunity to regard the Universe as their own and assume responsibility for it, by changing it, thinking about it, revealing it. In short, de Beauvoir believes that women share men's aspirations for sovereignty:

> For she, too, is an existent, she feels the urge to surpass, and her project is not mere repetition but transcendence towards a different future - in her heart of hearts she finds confirmation of the masculine pretensions.[18]

As to whether the free woman will be any different to the free man, de Beauvoir makes no prediction:

> It is not sure that her "ideational worlds" will be different from those of men, since it will be through attaining the same situation as theirs that she will find emancipation; to say in what degree she will remain different, in what degree these differences will retain their importance - this would be to hazard bold predictions indeed [my emphasis].[19]

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16. Ibid., p. 176.

17. Ibid., p. 721.

18. Ibid., p. 96.

19. Ibid., p. 724.

Clearly, de Beauvoir is no biological determinist. That women should have been kept in a state of Otherness and inferiority for so long is accounted for by the success of men's aspirations to transcend the givens of existence, a success perhaps having been initially secured by their superior physical strength. Nowadays, however, it is no longer the case that "anatomy determines destiny" in the way that it has in the past.

What is significant for present purposes is that while de Beauvoir discusses the association of woman and nature as Other and as inferior to the male realm of culture, her challenge is directed toward the status of women, not the status of nature. She does not question what she sees as the male aspiration for sovereignty via the domination of nature. Nor does she question the valuation of nature as inferior and Other. Indeed, she reinforces this valuation in her plea that women now join men in their project of transcending nature so that women too may participate as free human beings in the realm of culture. In short, de Beauvoir's position is that women have been second class citizens by virtue of their closer affinity to, and embeddedness in, nature and that they are now able to transcend that embeddedness by taking a step up in the hierarchy of being. Her exploration of the second sex is one that shows how women have been excluded from, and how they might now be included in, the hitherto male dominated realm of culture.

The anthropologist Sherry Ortner has taken a similar approach in her influential essay "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?" where she describes women as traditionally occupying a "'middle status' on the hierarchy of being from culture to nature," mediating between the two and performing a kind of conversion function.[20] According to Ortner, this mediating element might also explain why

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20. Sherry B. Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?," in Women, Culture and Society, eds. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lampshire (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), pp. 67-87 at p. 84. Ortner argues that women have been subordinated to men in every known society on the ground that they have been identified with something that every culture devalues as a lower order of existence than itself - nature (p. 72). Ortner rejects biological determinism, however, and argues instead that biological differences only take on a superior/inferior significance within the framework of a culturally defined value system. However, she claims that the treatment of women as second class citizens for being closer to nature (as distinct from being equated with nature) is a cultural

women are not only devalued but also circumscribed, "since culture must maintain control over its (pragmatic and symbolic) mechanism for the conversion of culture into nature."[21] Yet Ortner, like de Beauvoir, does not question this "masculine" conception of the cultural project. Culture, according to Ortner, is "the transcendence, by means of systems of thought and technology, of the natural givens of existence."[22] And, like de Beauvoir, Ortner agrees that:

> Ultimately, both men and women can and must be equally involved in projects of creativity and transcendence. Only then will women be seen as aligned with culture, in culture's ongoing dialectic with nature [my emphasis].[23]

While the plea for women to enjoy equal recognition is entirely justifiable from an ecocentric perspective, de Beauvoir's and Ortner's means of achieving that recognition (i.e., by women seeking full participation in a culture that regards nature as that "vein of gross material in which the soul is imprisoned") is highly problematic. In accepting the assumed inferiority of the natural realm and the idea that women have been more bound up in this realm than men, this kind of response to the ecofeminist problematic is compelled to regard the body as a shackle that holds women back from full participation in the "male realm" of culture. This not only downgrades nature (and the body) but also elevates the domineering sensibility of stereotypical "masculine culture" in a way that reinforces the human/nonhuman hierarchy of being that has been roundly criticized by ecofeminists, deep/transpersonal ecologists, social ecologists, and other ecophilosophers. From an ecocentric perspective, it is thoroughly anthropocentric to believe that there is something ennobling in a culture that sets itself above nature and assumes that what is distinctive about humans is more worthy than, rather than simply different to, the

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universal. This is because (i) women's bodily functions makes "her animality more manifest"; (ii) her social roles, which are domestic and particular rather than public and universal, are seen as less important than men's; and (iii) her psychic structure is more emotional, sentimental, "irrational," concrete, this-worldly, and subjective than men's. However, this psychic structure is the result of social-structural arrangements rather than biological givens.

21. Ibid., p. 87. See also Marilyn French, Beyond Power: Women, Men and Morality (London: Abacus, 1986), pp. 96-100.

22. Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?," p. 84.

23. Ibid., p. 87.

distinctive features of the nonhuman realm. As we saw in Chapter 2, this anthropocentric idea of the "differential imperative" asserts that we become more human and more virtuous if we maximise our "species-specific differentia."[24] In adopting and endorsing an active definition of culture that selects and celebrates what most distinguishes human societies from other animal societies (the ability to transform and transcend nature on a large scale through technology and symbols) both de Beauvoir and Ortner remain firmly wedded to the Enlightenment ideal of the progressive liberation of humans from all traditional and natural limits. In contrast, the ecological model of internal relations that informs ecocentrism emphasizes that humans are part of nature and that there are no absolute boundaries in nature, only relative boundaries. From the point of view of this perspective, it is philosophically misguided to believe that we can attain radical autonomy of thought and action and become fully sovereign subjects. Whatever our pretensions to complete sovereignty, the human condition is such that we can never be entirely "free" of these relationships and interconnections. This is not a tragedy but a rather a profound insight into the nature of things. If embraced positively, it can lead to a greater sense of care and responsibility toward other beings.

De Beauvoir's existentialist conception of what it means to be "fully human" shares the Marxist feminist (and, to some extent, liberal feminist) concern to open up opportunities for women to participate in the hitherto male dominated public realm and pursue options other than, or in addition to, child-bearing and child-rearing. Marxist feminism, in particular, raises the issue of gender in relation to both the sphere of production and reproduction under capitalism. In this respect, Engels' views in The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State are pertinent:

> The emancipation of women will only be possible when women can take part in production on a large scale, and domestic work no longer claims anything but an insignificant amount of time. And only now has that become possible through modern large-scale industry, which does not merely permit of the employment of female labour over a wide range, but positively demands it,

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24. John Rodman, "Paradigm Change in Political Science," American Behavioral Scientist 24 (1980): 49-78 at p. 54.

> while it also tends towards ending private domestic labour by changing it more and more into a public industry.[25]

In Engels' society of the future, there will no longer be men and women but workers on an equal footing, sharing in scientific socialism's creation of abundant wealth. In this sense, women may be seen as having a convergence of interest with the proletariat insofar as both can be set free through economic development and technical innovations that harness and manipulate the forces of nature to human benefit.

Perhaps the culmination of the feminist tendency toward technological optimism and a rejection of the body can be found in Shulamith Firestone's The Dialectic of Sex, where technology is seen as coming to the rescue of women by enabling the elimination of all sexual distinction and hence women's oppression. Firestone (who draws heavily on Marx's materialist conception of history) endorses modern technologies that break down women's ties with child-bearing and child-rearing - contraception, and extra-uterine gestation (i.e., test tube babies) - indeed, anything that would free women from the "tyranny of their reproductive biology" and diffuse child-bearing and child-rearing responsibilities. In her own terms, this would bring about a victory over the Kingdom of Nature:

> The "natural" is not necessarily a "human value." Humanity has begun to outgrow nature: we can no longer justify the maintenance of a discriminatory sex class system on grounds of its origins in Nature.[26]

Although there are important differences in the work of the above feminist theorists (de Beauvoir, for example, would reject historical materialism as too limited), they all share the same general (i.e., Enlightenment) orientation toward the nonhuman world and toward science and technology. With respect to the nonhuman world, the general orientation is anthropocentric; with respect to science and technology, the general orientation is uncritical and optimistic (although this tendency

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25. Friedrich Engels, The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1940), p. 184.

26. Shulamith Firestone, The Dialectic of Sex: The Case for Feminist Revolution (New York: William Morrow, 1970), p. 10. In Firestone's view, pregnancy and childbirth are "barbaric" and "painful"; accordingly, the natural childbirth movement is seen as reactionary and inimical to the liberation of women.

is clearly much stronger in Firestone than in de Beauvoir or Ortner). Not surprisingly, Firestone has been roundly attacked by radical feminists who argue that women should celebrate rather than reject what is distinctive about the female body. Moreover, radical feminists have been quick to counsel against women pinning their faith in advanced technology as a prerequisite for the emancipation of women on the ground that it (especially reproductive technology) is a male controlled domain.[27] More generally, Adrienne Rich has remarked that

> ... many women see any appeal to the physical as a denial of mind. We have been perceived for too many centuries as pure Nature, exploited and raped like the earth and solar system; small wonder if we now long to become Culture: pure spirit, mind.[28]

It is clear, then, that there is nothing ecocentric about de Beauvoir's feminist existentialism or about Marxist feminism (I shall collectively refer to the theorists discussed in this section as the "cultural feminists"). They challenge neither anthropocentrism nor the technological domination of nature. However, it is important to be clear as to why this is so. It is not simply that they regard the historical and symbolic association of woman and nature as burdensome. It is this combined with their uncritical acceptance of human/nonhuman hierarchy of being (which encompasses the culture/nature dichotomy) and their aspiration for a certain kind of freedom or sovereignty (radical autonomy of thought and action) that leads this group of feminists to adopt an anthropocentric and technologically optimistic posture toward the world. Given this, it should be at least theoretically possible for ecologically concerned feminists to agree that the woman/nature association has been historically burdensome without necessarily endorsing a human/nonhuman hierarchical dualism and all that it entails (e.g., that the body is a shackle, that culture must dominate/transcend nature if it is to advance, that the human quest is the attainment of radical autonomy of thought and action). Let us now explore how ecofeminist theorists have approached these issues.

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27. For a general discussion, see Alison M. Jaggar, Feminist Politics and Human Nature (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1983), pp. 85-98.

28. Adrienne Rich, Of Women Born: Motherhood as Experience and Institution (London: Virago, 1977), p. 285.

Celebrating the Feminine: The Body as the Natural Home and Source of Earth-Wisdom

This second group of radical feminist theorists (whom I shall describe as "radical ecofeminists") in many ways represent the "flip side" of the cultural feminists in terms of their response to the ecofeminist problematic (although their shared concern for improving the status of women should not be overlooked).[29] Whereas cultural feminists have rejected the association of women and nature as burdensome, radical ecofeminists, while recognizing that the association has been used to oppress women in the past, have nonetheless embraced the idea of woman's immanence/rootedness in nature as a source of empowerment for women and the basis of a critique of the male domination of women and nonhuman nature. According to Adrienne Rich:

> The repossession by women of our bodies will bring far more essential change to human society than the seizing of the means of production by workers. The female body has been both territory and machine, virgin wilderness to be exploited and assembly-line turning out life. We need to imagine a world in which every woman is the presiding genius of her own body.[30]

This is an explicitly ecofeminist project since it celebrates what has traditionally been regarded as Other - both woman and nonhuman nature - in the context of a far-reaching critique of hierarchical dualism and "masculine" culture.[31] Indeed, it is this notion of "female immanence" in nature that provides the basis of the controversial ecofeminist claim that women have a special vantage point from which

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29. Joan Griscom has drawn a distinction between "social feminism" and "nature feminism," which corresponds to my distinction between cultural feminism and radical ecofeminism. See Joan L. Griscom, "On Healing the Nature/History Split in Feminist Thought," Heresies 13 (1981): 4-9 at p. 5.

30. Rich, Of Woman Born, p. 285.

31. Major radical ecofeminists include Susan Griffin, Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her (New York: Harper and Row, 1978); Mary Daly, Gyn/Ecology: The Meta-Ethics of Radical Feminism (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978); Adrienne Rich, Of Woman Born; Starhawk, The Spiral Dance: A Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979); Elizabeth Dodson Gray, Green Paradise Lost; Ariel Kay Salleh, "Deeper than Deep Ecology: The Ecofeminist Connection," Environmental Ethics 6 (1984): 339-45; Ynestra King, "Toward an Ecological Feminism and a Feminist Ecology"; and Jim Cheney, "Eco-feminism and Deep Ecology."

to examine the domination of nature and a corresponding special interest in protecting nature. Rather than aspire to join men in what de Beauvoir believes is an ascent from nature, radical ecofeminists seek to subvert the dominant valuation of what human characteristics and activities are most valuable. This project entails a rejection of many of the "cultural conquests" of men and a celebration of the previously undervalued nurturing characteristics of women. In this respect, the emphasis is less on the need for women to attain the same situation as men in the public sphere and more on the need for men to become increasingly involved in the domestic and child-rearing sphere. In this new valuation, the body (like nature at large) is not seen as limiting - as that "vein of gross material in which the soul is imprisoned" (as de Beauvoir saw it). Rather, nature is celebrated by radical ecofeminists as the "earthly home" of our experience of the world while the body - far from being considered a shackle - is celebrated as the porous membrane through which we are intimately connected to all living beings.

In contrast to the more secular and rationality-based leanings of cultural feminists, many radical ecofeminists are vitally interested in cultivating a feminist spirituality, whether it be through retrieving the insights of nonhierarchical pre-Christian cultures or reviving other earth-based traditional practices (e.g., celebrating the Goddess-oriented culture of Old Europe, pagan rituals, Gaia, the body, natural cycles, and the experience of connectedness and embodiment in general).[32] In this respect, most radical ecofeminists would have much sympathy with Gary Snyder's sentiment that "our troubles began with the invention of male deities located off the planet."[33]

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32. See, for example, Charlene Spretnak, The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics (Santa Fe, New Mexico: Bear and Company, n.d.); reprinted as Appendix C in Charlene Spretnak and Fritjof Capra, Green Politics: The Global Promise (London: Paladin, 1986), pp. 230-58; Starhawk, Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex, and Politics (Boston: Beacon Press, 1982); and Judith Plant, ed., Healing the Wounds, Part Three ("She is Alive in You: Ecofeminist Spirituality"), pp. 115-88.

33. Gary Snyder, "Anarchism, Buddhism, and Political Economy," lecture delivered at the Fort Mason Centre, San Francisco, 27 February 1984 (quoted by Charlene Spretnak, "The Spiritual Dimensions of Green Politics," in Spretnak and Capra, Green Politics, p. 238.)

As part of their critique of hierarchical dualism, radical ecofeminists have been particularly critical of the Judaeo-Christian heritage. According to the ecofeminist theologian Elizabeth Dodson Gray, the Christian idea of dominion over other beings found in Genesis 1:26 "is paternalistic, clothed still in hierarchical categories, and subtly related to such old ideas as 'enlightened slave owners' and 'the white man's burden.'" It means being "graciously responsible for that which is below us."[34] In Dodson Gray's view, we need to move toward an "embodied ecospirituality" and re-myth Genesis in a way that honours diversity by moving our culture "to a creation-based valuing of all parts of nature."[35]

According to Spretnak, ecofeminism proceeds from a holistic, ecological perspective that is avowedly post-modern, post-patriarchal, and post-humanist.[36] In this respect, radical ecofeminism has much in common with other ecocentric approaches, such as deep or transpersonal ecology, that have developed nonanthropocentric and nonhierarchical philosophies from the ecological insights of interconnectedness and mutuality. Both proceed from a process oriented, relational image of nature where all organisms are viewed as "knots in the biospherical net or field of intrinsic [i.e., internal] relations," to borrow Arne Naess's description.[37] Radical ecofeminists, like other ecocentric theorists, have also pointed to the similarities between the ecological world-view and modern physics.[38] As Elizabeth Dodson Gray has put it, the root of the modern ecological crisis is that "we do not

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34. Elizabeth Dodson Gray, Green Paradise Lost, p. 140.

35. Ibid., p. 148.

36. Charlene Spretnak, "The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics," pp. 234-38.

37. Arne Naess, "The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology Movement. A Summary," Inquiry 16 (1973): 95-100 at p. 95.

38. Ecofeminists who have pointed to these similarities include Marti Kheel, "The Liberation of Nature: A Circular Affair," Environmental Ethics 7 (1985): 135-49 at p. 136, and Dodson Gray, Green Paradise Lost, Chapter 7. Other ecocentric philosophers who have drawn attention to these similarities include Warwick Fox, "Deep Ecology: A New Philosophy of our Time?" The Ecologist 14 (1984): 194-200; J. Baird Callicott, "The Metaphysical Implications of Ecology," Environmental Ethics 8 (1986): 301-16; and Michael Zimmerman, "Quantum Theory, Intrinsic Value and Panentheism, Environmental Ethics 10 (1988): 3-30.

understand who we are"; when we realize that we are intimately connected with the larger whole then "what hurts any part of my larger system hurts me."[39]

The particular ecological sensibility cultivated by radical ecofeminism would appear to be indistinguishable from the "wider identification approach" of transpersonal ecology but for two significant differences. The first relates to the kinds of identification that are emphasised and the kinds of self that identify; the second relates to the kinds of theoretical explanation offered to account for the environmental crisis, which give rise to different cultural and political strategies. I will consider each of these aspects in turn.

(i) Radical Ecofeminism's Personal and Gender Specific Sense of Self

The sense of self defended by radical ecofeminism is both personal and gender specific. In the words of Elizabeth Dodson Gray, sickness, pregnancy, and childbirth enable women to discover that

> ... all of you is in that body. Your mind and your will and everything that has ever been or ever will be of you is "in" and "expressed through" and "experiencing" with that woman's body that is your own. That body is your self ... I must now always include my body whenever I think of myself. I must now shape a self-concept which has a women's bodily form.[40]

In Dodson Gray's sense of self, we are identified in gender terms, that is, we are first and foremost a woman or a man rather than a human, and it is from our gender perspective that we identify with the larger whole. This differs from the transpersonal ecology sense of self (explained and discussed in Chapters 2 and 7) in two important respects. First, Dodson Gray (like most radical ecofeminists) emphasizes a form of identification with the world that is based on personal contact and, hence, familiarity. In contrast, transpersonal ecology theorists, while recognizing that personally based

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39. Elizabeth Dodson Gray, Green Paradise Lost, pp. 84 and 85.

40. Ibid., p. 81. In providing this kind of emphasis to the self, Gray is attempting to mount a challenge to the disembodied nature of spiritual concerns. For example, she writes that "we have pretended our selfhood was only 'clothed' in body, 'dwelling in body,' unjustly 'imprisoned' in body, while our immortal souls, our vast and beautiful selfhoods, could soar off to higher realms where baths were not necessary and where illness and pain, aging and dying, did not exist" (p. 92).

kinds of identification have a significant place in everyday life, emphasize a cosmologically based form of identification. Second, one's gender identity forms an integral part of the ecofeminist process of identification whereas it is not particularly relevant to the transpersonal ecology process of cosmological identification.[41]

Indeed, transpersonal ecologists object to the radical ecofeminist's emphasis on personally based identification on the ground that this form of identification can lead to excessive partiality, attachment, possessiveness, and parochialism.[42] Instead, transpersonal ecologists argue for a cosmologically based approach to identification, that is, an approach that "proceeds from a sense of the cosmos (such as that provided by the image of the tree of life) and works inward to each particular individual's sense of commonality with other entities."[43] Fox describes this as an "outside-in" rather than "inside-out" approach. As we saw in the previous chapter, cosmologically based identification represents a more impartial, inclusive, and, hence, more egalitarian approach to identification than does a personally based approach in that it leads one to identify with all of the human and nonhuman world irrespective of one's personal involvement. This does not mean, however, that transpersonal ecologists wish to deny the significance of personally based identification - indeed, Fox acknowledges that this kind of identification is the easiest and most immediate experience of identification available to humans. Rather, transpersonal ecologists simply seek to locate personally based identification in a wider cosmological context.

Some ecofeminists, in turn, object that this wider identification approach of transpersonal ecology is hyper-rational, disembodied, and/or "masculine."[44]

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41. See Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," pp. 12-13.

42. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, pp. 414-17.

43. Ibid., pp. 408-9.

44. See Janet Biehl, "It's Deep, But is it Broad?"; Ariel Kay Salleh, "Deeper than Deep Ecology"; and Jim Cheney, "The Neo-Stoicism of Radical Environmentalism," Environmental Ethics 11 (1989): 293-325. Cheney's paper is, in part, a response to Warwick Fox, Approaching Deep Ecology: A Response to Richard Sylvan's Critique of Deep Ecology, Environmental Studies Occasional Paper no. 20 (Hobart: Centre for Environmental Studies, University of Tasmania, 1986). Fox has replied to a pre-publication version of Cheney's critique in Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," pp. 11-13.

However, this objection misconstrues transpersonal ecology. The cosmological emphasis of transpersonal ecology does not mean that it is other-worldly or disembodied. Quite the contrary. Transpersonal ecology is concerned to develop a this-wordly, lived sense of our commonality with all beings. Moreover, many deep or transpersonal ecology theorists (like many ecofeminists) emphasize the importance of the body as a porous membrane interacting with the rest of nature and as a medium of identification. In a recent interview, for example, George Sessions - a leading deep ecologist - observed:

> It seems important to note that urbanized people are often alienated from their bodies, too, and so we don't experience ourselves as part of nature or recognize our connectedness to the evolutionary process through our body. And yet, a wilderness lives inside us.
>
> We are like an ecosystem. We tend, however, to see ourselves (mind and body) dualistically and mechanistically as a management problem over which we must be in control instead of allowing the wisdom of the body and the mind, our natural ecosystem to function.[45]

From a transpersonal ecology perspective, then, there is nothing disembodied about the cosmological emphasis of transpersonal ecology. Moreover, as Fox argues, this kind of identification does not seek to draw specific gender boundaries in that it is a kind of identification that is available to both women and men.[46]

However, a more significant difference between ecofeminism and ecocentrism (particularly that kind of ecocentric approach defended by transpersonal ecology) arises in relation to the further claim made by some ecofeminists that there is something special about women's experience that makes women <u>better placed than men</u> to identify with nonhuman beings, ecological processes, and the larger whole. This argument takes two forms (although these are not always clearly differentiated). On the one hand, it is often claimed that this privileged eco-wisdom arises by virtue of what is unique about women's bodies. Here, the special connection between women and nature is usually presented as something that is grounded in women's

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45. George Sessions, interview, <u>Creation Magazine</u>, June 1989, p. 7 (this citation refers to the prepublication manuscript). See also Dolores LaChapelle, <u>Sacred Land, Sacred Sex: Rapture of the Deep</u> (Silverton, Colorado: Finn Hill Arts, 1988).

46. See Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," pp. 12-13.

reproductive capabilities. On the other hand, it is often claimed that this special eco-wisdom arises by virtue of women's oppression. Here, the special connection between women and nature is regarded more as a convenient ideological construct of patriarchy. However, the separate reality of women that has resulted from this historical association is nonetheless heralded as the basis of an alternative, more caring morality. I will refer to these two arguments as the "body-based argument" and the "oppression argument" respectively. In both cases, the connection between woman and nature is embraced as a source of special insight and empowerment for women.

A leading proponent of the "body-based argument" is Elizabeth Dodson Gray, who has claimed that women's bodily experiences (e.g., ovulation, menstruation, pregnancy, childbirth, suckling the young) confer on women a greater sense of connectedness with life than men:

> I am asserting that there is a definite limit to the perception of men. It is a limit imposed upon their consciousness by the lack of certain bodily experiences which are present in the life of woman. No matter how androgynous men may become, it is therefore not possible for men alone to lead us into a society with a fully developed sense of its limited but harmonious place in nature ... because the male's is simply a much diminished experience of body, of natural processes, and of future generations [my emphasis].[47]

Similarly, Ariel Kay Salleh has argued:

> Women's monthly fertility cycle, the tiring symbiosis of pregnancy, the wrench of childbirth and the pleasure of suckling an infant, these things already ground women's consciousness in the knowledge of being coterminous with Nature... [Deep Ecology] overlooks the point that if women's lived experience were recognized as meaningful and were given legitimation in our culture, it could provide an immediate "living" social basis for the alternative consciousness which the deep ecologist is trying to formulate and introduce as an abstract ethical construct. Women already, to borrow Devall's turn of phrase, "flow with the system of nature."[48]

However, Salleh also has recourse to the oppression-argument:

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47. Elizabeth Dodson Gray, Green Paradise Lost, p. 114. It must be noted that not all ecofeminists pursue this particular line of argument. Charlene Spretnak, for example, has stated: "I agree with most critics of modern religion who surmise that post-modern religion will have 'more to do with the body.' I believe we need only pay attention to our body wisdom rather than seeking transcendence 'above' the body to the realms of the sky god." Spretnak goes on to argue, however, that both men and women are capable of learning from the teachings of what she calls "body parables." See Spretnak, "The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics," p. 243.

48. Salleh, "Deeper than Deep Ecology," p. 340.

> ... the traditional feminine role runs counter to the exploitive technical rationality which is currently the requisite masculine norm. In place of the disdain that the feminine role receives from all quarters, "the separate reality" of this role could well be taken seriously by ecologists and re-examined as a legitimate source of alternative values ... for herein lies the basis of a genuinely grounded and nurturant environmentalism.[49]

Similarly, Ynestra King has argued that women have a special role to play in bringing about a "rational reenchantment [of nature] that brings together spiritual and material, being and knowing."[50] Like Salleh, King argues that this special role arises by virtue of the women's unique vantage point, enabling women to "act as a bridge for men, back to the parts of themselves they have denied."[51] However, in King's view (contra Gray), it is not because women are "more natural" or more ecologically attuned but rather because they have been oppressed that women are in a better position to imagine an alternative vision from the vantage point of critical otherness.[52] More recently, Salleh has resiled from her earlier position (where she used both the body-based and the oppression argument) by resting her case on solely the oppression argument:

> Ecofeminists ... argue that by constructing feminine experience in this way [i.e., as closer to nature], patriarchy placed women in a privileged nurturant relation to other living things. Hence the value of feminine insights in a time of eco-catastrophe. It's not that women are actually closer to nature than men, clearly we all live in continuity with gaia. But throughout history, men have chosen to set themselves apart, usually "over and above" nature and women.[53]

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49. Salleh, "Deeper than Deep Ecology," pp. 342-43. Jim Cheney mounts a similar case in arguing (drawing on Carol Gilligan, In a Different Voice [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982]) that women speak in a "different voice" and have a different and better morality to men (i.e., one that is personal, emotional, and contextualized rather than impersonal, rational, and abstract) and that an environmental ethic must speak in this "different voice" (Cheney, "Ecofeminism and Deep Ecology").

50. King, "Feminism and the Revolt of Nature," p. 14.

51. Ibid. See also King, "Toward an Ecological Feminism," p. 123.

52. A similar argument is mounted by Janet Biehl ("It's Deep, But is it Broad?"), who rejects the idea that women are inherently closer to nature than men, claiming it to be an ideological construct that has been used to oppress women.

53. Ariel Salleh, "Stirrings of a New Renaissance," Island Magazine, Autumn 1989, pp. 26-31 at p. 26. Yet in the same article, in a discussion of nondualist feminist epistemology and women's sense of continuity with the world, Salleh again returns to the body-based argument in suggesting that "maybe the sensual symbiosis of another human living inside oneself is the archetype of this" (p. 28).

Now none of the ecofeminists cited above seek to exclude men from the task of building an alternative ecological society. Indeed, their social and political goal is to transcend old stereotypes and arrive at a new balance between female and male perceptions that recognizes that humans come in two different forms.[54] Yet while radical ecofeminism does not purport to be exclusivist, it nonetheless has this effect insofar as it seeks not simply to render visible but to privilege women's experience of the world on the grounds of women's sexual and/or gender identity (which map onto the body-based and oppression-based arguments respectively).[55] I will examine these sex and gender aspects of the claim in turn.

Ecofeminist theorists who rest their case on women's biological differences embrace the historical and symbolic association between women and nature as evidence that women are in fact closer to nature and are therefore better placed than men to speak on its behalf and lead the way in ecological reconstruction. While it cannot be denied that male and female bodily experiences do differ in a number of important respects, to claim that the particular experiences that are unique to women confer on women a superior (as distinct from merely special and different) insight into our relatedness with life is highly problematic from both a social and ecological perspective. Such an approach comes close to turning the tables of the status quo by

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54. According to Gray: "What lies ahead is a new interplay of male and female perspectives which goes beyond old stereotypes, a mutuality and symbiosis in which both are truly autonomous. I do not think masculine and feminine will then be understood in terms of androgyny and Jungian categories - which seem to me to accept that 'masculine' is innately rational and active, 'feminine' is innately intuitive and passive. I doubt also that masculine and feminine will be cast in Yin/Yang terms - which again confine the one to activity and the other to passivity" (Green Paradise Lost, p. 153). And Salleh: "... ecofeminism is not about setting women up in power, as such, it is about getting what are called 'feminine' values reinstated to a culture that is badly skewed the other way" ("Stirrings of a New Renaissance," p. 30). Similarly, King has argued that the connection between woman and nature can be used as "a vantage point for creating a different kind of culture and politics that would integrate intuitive/spiritual and rational forms of knowledge, embracing both science and magic insofar as they enable us to transform the nature/culture distinction itself and to envision and create a free, ecological society" ("Toward an Ecological Feminism," p. 123).

55. By sexual identity I mean anatomically expressed genetic differences; by gender identity, I mean the "cultural overlay" (the different social roles and positions in the social hierarchy) that has been built on sexual differences. This is merely a useful analytical construct; it is accepted that there is no clear divide between an individual's experience of her or his sexual and gender identity.

asking men to defer to the special body consciousness and associated "nurturing moral insights" of women on the highly contentious premise that men have, as Gray asserts, a "much diminished experience of body, of natural processes, and of future generations." It thus raises a new kind of "differential imperative" to that discussed by Rodman in that it suggests that women become better or more worthy beings (i.e., beings who are at once more "womanly" and more ecologically aware) if they maximise not their species-specific differentia but rather their sex-specific differentia. Despite the claim by radical ecofeminists that their alternative transcends old dichotomies, it is hard to see how this kind of approach can lead to a new harmony between the sexes in view of the extent to which it privileges women's biological differences and associated eco-wisdom. Whereas cultural feminists sought to reaffirm their solidarity with men at the expense of the rest of nature, radical feminists may be seen as seeking to reaffirm their solidarity with the rest of nature at the expense of men. Indeed, theorists such as Gray come close to being hoist by their own petard in that they introduce a new hierarchical dualism that subtly condemns man to an inferior status (of Otherness) by suggesting that man's biology renders him incapable of participating in the particular kind of body-based consciousness that is claimed to confer on women a keener awareness of ecological connectedness. Yet, as other ecofeminists and transpersonal ecologists show, there is no a priori reason why men and women cannot both participate in personally and cosmologically body based forms of identification.[56] To the extent that the body awareness of interrelatedness may differ between men and women, there is no reason why either should be socially elevated as superior to the other.

The insights of the cultural feminists provide an important counterpoint here. Cultural feminists observe that new technologies and the industrial revolution have reduced the importance of sexual differences between men and women; they

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56. See, for example, Spretnak, "The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics"; LaChapelle, Earth Wisdom (Los Angeles: Guild of Tutors Press, 1978); LaChapelle, Sacred Land, Sacred Sex; and John Seed, Joanna Macy, Pat Fleming, and Arne Naess, Thinking like a Mountain: Towards a Council of All Beings (Santa Cruz: New Society Publishers, 1988).

also point out that the nurturing qualities usually associated with women are for the most part attributed to the social division of labour and therefore can be made more culturally diffuse through shared parenting (the latter reform is, of course, strongly supported by radical feminists). Finally, as Joan Griscom observes,

> ... simply because women are <u>able</u> to bear children does not mean that doing so is <u>essential</u> to our nature. Contraception clarifies this distinction: the ability to give birth can now be suppressed, and there are powerful ecological pressures in favour of this. In this context, it is important that biology <u>not</u> be our destiny.[57]

The oppression argument - that women are in a better position to critically evaluate ecological practices and envision an alternative society by virtue of their <u>oppression</u> rather than their biology - provides a more defensible reason for paying special attention to the experiences of women (subject to certain qualifications that I introduce below). Here, attention is focused on the cultural attributes of gender (rather than biological differences per se), and on the power relations that have flowed from these cultural distinctions, in order to challenge the dominant androcentric paradigm of human nature. That women have been less implicated than men in major activities and centres of ecological destruction (e.g., the military, the boardroom, science, and bureaucracy) is itself a good reason to hear what women have to say on the subject. To the extent that women do not conform to the dominant androcentric paradigm, they clearly do occupy a vantage point of "critical otherness" from which they can offer a different way of looking at the problems of both patriarchy <u>and</u> ecological destruction. Of course, the same can be said of other minority groups in society such as indigenous tribespeople, ethnic minorities, and other oppressed groups who have been under-represented in social and economic decision-making - a point that should not be forgotten if we are concerned to develop a comprehensive emancipatory theory, as I argue below.

This oppression argument has strong parallels with the elevation of "the worker" in socialist theory in that it calls attention to the previously ignored or undervalued vantage point of the oppressed. Now this process of "rendering visible the invisible" certainly forms an indispensable part of the emancipatory process. It

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57. Griscom, "On Healing the Nature/History Split," p. 8.

provides the space for oppressed groups to "speak out," it builds confidence and self-esteem by recognizing and affirming the experience of the downtrodden and forgotten, and it enables others to empathize with their plight (here, the feminist practice of "consciousness raising" within a supportive group context provides an exemplary illustration of this kind of empowerment.) And, as already noted, it also provides a fresh, critical perspective on dominant valuations and legitimations of existing practices. But is it going too far to suggest that "women's subordinate position means that, unlike men, women do not have an interest in mystifying reality and so are likely to develop a clearer and more trustworthy understanding of the world"?[58]

Many radical ecofeminists have taken insufficient heed of the problems (both practical and theoretical) associated with this last mentioned claim. A strong identification with, and glorification of, the vantage point of the oppressed can sometimes lead to an excessive partiality, an attitude of "Us versus Them," and a tendency to believe that the victim can do no wrong. As Jane Flax has argued in a different context,

> ... the notion of a feminist standpoint also assumes that the oppressed are not in fundamental ways damaged by their social experience. On the contrary, this position assumes that the oppressed have a privileged (and not just different) relation and ability to comprehend reality.[59]

Indeed, criticisms of this kind that have been levelled against radical feminist theorists in general are particularly pertinent here since most of the ecofeminist theorists discussed above largely proceed on the basis of this problematic radical feminist assumption. As Joan Cocks has pointedly observed, radical feminism

> ... assumes, against every lesson of history, that to be a member of an oppressor group is ipso facto to know exactly what one is doing, and to be a member of an oppressed group is to be morally innocent or better still, morally good ... A refusal to attend to the complexities of consciousness shows up in its claims that men are single-minded enough to go about with the sole desire of manipulating women, and intelligent enough to act on that desire with any great and consistent success.[60]

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58. Jaggar, Feminist Politics and Human Nature, p. 384.

59. Jane Flax, "Postmodernism and Gender Relations Theory," Signs 12 (1987): 621-43 at p. 642.

An over-identification with the perspective (as distinct from the suffering) of the victim can ultimately inhibit the emancipatory process by offering an analysis that (i) denies the extent to which many women may be complicit in the domination of nature; (ii) overlooks the various ways in which men have been oppressed by limiting "masculine stereotypes"; and (iii) is blind to other social forces and prejudices that do not bear on the question of gender. It can also give rise to an excessive righteousness and a confrontational stance that can lead to the making of ill-considered generalizations that often serve to alienate hostile and sympathetic men alike. Cocks also points to what she describes as a "curious collusion" between radical feminism and the hyper-rational male hegemony that it so vehemently opposes:

> ... in completely condemning the dominant order, women's culture is pressed to present itself as that order's perfect opposite, and so as the reverse image of the order's self image. The more avidly it describes itself as all the established society is not, the more it shows itself an unwitting prisoner of the established conceptual schema, which delineates for it definition and counter definition, image and counter image.[61]

While a challenge to "malestream rationality" is certainly in order, a simple reversal of the human characteristics that are considered to be valuable will merely lead to problems of a different kind. That is, when radical feminism is taken to this kind of extreme, such a response merely serves to foreclose the possibility of transcending dominant and oppressive cultural dichotomies since it seeks to replace the hyper-rational, impersonal, and abstract "male" standard of human virtue with an excessively particular, personal, and emotional "female" standard. Yet simply substituting love, sentiment, and personal affiliation for abstract justice can lead to excessive possessiveness, parochialism, and even xenophobia. As Fox explains, the problem with those forms of affiliation and identification that are purely personal is that they "can slip so easily - and imperceptibly - into attachment and

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60. Joan Cocks, "Wordless Emotions: Some Critical Reflections on Radical Feminism," Politics and Society 13 (1984): 27-57 at p. 30. Similarly, Fox has argued that this kind of refusal to attend to the complexities of social relations can lead to the problems of scapegoating and inauthenticity, or over- and under-inclusiveness in social theorizing. The result is to target all men as oppressors (and blameworthy) and all women as oppressed (and blameless). See Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," pp. 13-14. See also Zimmerman, "Feminism, Deep Ecology, and Environmental Ethics," pp. 40-41.

61. Cocks, "Wordless Emotions," p. 35.

proprietorship."[62] Emphasizing the emotional, personal, and particular over the rational, impersonal, and general also tends toward the adoption of a simplistic and overly hostile posture toward science and technology.[63] Yet as Evelyn Fox Keller argues, it is not the scientific enterprise per se that is the problem, it the "masculine biases" (and I would add racist and anthropocentric prejudices) that have distorted this enterprise that must be challenged; remove them and science will become potentially liberating (this argument is dealt with more fully in the third section.) A new social and environmental ethic must take account of what Carol Pateman has referred to (in a different context) as the dialectic between the private, individual, and particular and the public, social, and universal.[64]

So far, I have been concerned to register the "down-side" of excessively privileging the vantage point of women. I will now explore how this kind of focus in radical ecofeminism bears upon the three major theoretical explanations that have been put forward by radical ecofeminist theorists to account for the domination of women and nature. These are the "patriarchy thesis," the "hierarchical dualism thesis," and the "psycho-sexual explanation" (each of these arguments will be explained and discussed in the following three subsections). When it comes to theorising, as Jaggar notes:

> Those who construct the standpoint of women must begin from women's experience as women describe it, but they must go beyond that experience theoretically and ultimately may require that women's experience be redescribed.[65]

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62. Fox, Transpersonal Ecology, p. 414.

63. For example, Salleh has argued that "ecofeminists believe the current global crisis is a consequence of the traditional exclusion of women from patriarchal institutions; the most dangerous of these being 'science,' which replaces religion in our time as ruling myth." ("Stirrings of a New Renaissance," p. 26.) Is Salleh meaning to imply here that things would have been different if women had been properly represented in these institutions? If so, how would women have retained their "different voice" and not become co-opted by dominant institutions given that they would no longer occupy a vantage point of critical otherness? This remains unexplained.

64. See Carol Pateman, "'The Disorder of Women': Women, Love, and the Sense of Justice," Ethics 91 (1980): 20-34 at p. 33.

65. Jaggar, Feminist Politics and Human Nature, p. 384.

In the case of radical ecofeminism, privileging - rather than simply rendering visible and critically incorporating - the special insights of women (whether on grounds of sex and/or gender) has tended to lead to a lop-sided and reductionist analysis that gives a special priority to the concerns of feminism vis-a-vis ecology.[66] This is particularly apparent in the "patriarchy thesis."

(ii) The Patriarchy Thesis

The patriarchy thesis asserts that it is patriarchal consciousness that has given rise to not only the domination of women but also the domination of the nonhuman world. According to this argument, the special focus on anthropocentrism by ecocentric theorists is seen as deflecting attention away from the problem of gender hierarchy, which radical ecofeminists see as the real source of ecological degradation.[67]

Yet the ecofeminist argument that patriarchy lies at the root of the domination of women and nature has serious flaws. It is one thing to note parallels in the logic or symbolic structure of different kinds of domination (surely this is enough to explain the strong resonance in the egalitarian orientations of the radical feminist and ecology movements - see Rosemary Radford Ruether's argument below) and another thing to argue that the kinds of domination that radical feminists and radical ecologists are addressing stem from the one source. This is an ambitious and sweeping argument for ecofeminists to maintain since it is effectively asserting the existence of a causal relationship - that anthropocentrism is derived from and hence caused by patriarchy. This runs into the same difficulties as Bookchin's social

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66. Take, for instance, Janet Biehl's description of the ecofeminist project. According to Biehl, the "aspiration of the revolutionary heart of the feminist and ecofeminist movement" is to overcome the self-effacement and marginalization that women have suffered for millenia and to strive "for a full recognition of their subjectivity and selfhood in a new [nonhierarchical] society" ("It's Deep, But is it Broad?" p. 2A). Biehl's principal concern is clearly with women's oppression rather than the domination of nature and her principal target is patriarchy and social hierarchy rather than anthropocentrism.

67. For a sensitive survey of this debate see Michael Zimmerman, "Feminism, Deep Ecology and Environmental Ethics," pp. 37-38; for a deep ecology response see Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate"; and Alan E. Wittbecker, "Deep Anthropology: Ecology and Human Order," Environmental Ethics 8 (1986): 261-70.

hierarchy thesis, which I discussed in the previous chapter. It means that it must be shown that patriarchy not only pre-dated but also gave rise to anthropocentrism - in other words, that there is a necessary connection between the two phenomena. How, then, do we explain the existence of patriarchy in traditional societies that have lived in harmony with the natural world?[68] How do we explain the existence of "scientific socialism" (recall Engels' vision) where the possibility of egalitarian social/sexual relations is premised on the instrumental manipulation and domination of the nonhuman world (modern Cuba perhaps comes closest to following this model in practice)?[69] Both examples demonstrate the absence of a necessary link between the two phenomena, which implies that patriarchy and the domination of nonhuman nature can each be the product of quite different historical developments. It follows that the emancipation of women need not necessarily lead to the emancipation of the nonhuman world and vice versa - indeed, the cultural feminist perspective discussed above provides a clear example of how the emancipation of women is to be achieved at the expense of the nonhuman world.[70]

The above criticisms of the ecofeminist case are not intended to deny that patriarchy and anthropocentrism can be mutually reinforcing where they do occur together. In this respect, both women and the nonhuman world can indeed be seen to

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68. See Joan Babberger, "The Myth of Matriarchy: Why Men Rule in Primitive Societies," in Woman, Culture, and Society, eds. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), pp. 263-80, and Marilyn French, Beyond Power, pp. 96-100.

69. Of course, Cuba falls well short of realizing its ideal of achieving a thoroughgoing egalitarian society. The important point, however, is that such a society is logically possible. Fox makes the same point in observing that the "'green' critique of socialism (and other egalitarian social and political theories) proceeds from precisely this recognition that a socially egalitarian society does not necessarily imply an ecologically benign society" (Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," p. 15).

70. As Fox - who has made similar points in his response to ecofeminist (and related) critiques of deep ecology - points out, such a claim is not only facile and misleading, it also serves to further legitimize and perpetuate our traditional preoccupation with human problems at the expense of the nonhuman world (ibid., pp. 15-16). It would, of course, be equally simplistic and reductionistic for ecocentric theorists to claim that anthropocentrism is the "real root" of the ecological crisis, ignoring social relations and technology. This, however, is to be distinguished from Fox's argument, which I introduced in the previous chapter, that anthropocentrism is nonetheless the most fundamental legitimating ideology with respect to human domination.

have a mutual "interest" in emancipation from the status of Otherness. Yet those ecofeminists who seek to explain the historical conjunction between these two phenomena via the prism of patriarchy suffer from a degree of circularity in trying to find a causal explanation in what is a complex pattern of mutual reinforcement. Was it man's contempt for woman (who was associated with nature) or man's contempt for nature (which was associated with woman) that led to the domination of nature and/or women? For example, Ynestra King has argued, on the one hand, that the domination of women is "the prototype of other forms of domination" (of which the domination of nature is but one example). On the other hand, she has noted the mutual reinforcement between patriarchy and the domination of nature and argue that

> ... the building of Western industrial civilization in opposition to nature interacts dialectically with and reinforces the subjugation of women because women are believed to be closer to nature in this culture against nature [my emphasis].[71]

This second statement suggests that it is male culture's opposition to nature (with whom women were identified) - rather than opposition to women per se - that is the root of the problem, yet the source of this opposition is not explained by proponents of the patriarchy thesis.

(iii) The Hierarchical Dualism Thesis

Other ecofeminists, such as the theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether, have located the philosophical source of the link between patriarchy and anthropocentrism in hierarchical or "transcendent dualism":

> Fundamentally this is rooted in an effort to deny one's mortality, to identify essential (male) humanity with a transcendent divine sphere beyond the matrix of coming-to-be-and-passing-away. By the same token, woman became identified with the sphere of finitude that one must deny in order to negate one's own origins and inclusion in this realm. The woman, the body, and the world were the lower half of a dualism that must be declared posterior to, created by, subject to, and ultimately alien to the nature of (male) consciousness, in whose image man made his God.[72]

According to this line of argument, hierarchical or transcendent dualism laid the philosophical foundation for both the domination of women and the domination of

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71. King, "Toward an Ecological Feminism and a Feminist Ecology," p. 119.

72. Ruether, New Woman New Earth, p. 195.

nonhuman nature. In particular, the range of dualisms contained in the God-Man-Woman-Nature hierarchy of being provided the mechanism by which both women and nature might be associated and downgraded - at least at the symbolic and conceptual levels. This hierarchical dualism thesis thus provides a more general, "higher order" explanation than the patriarchy thesis (which claims that it was patriarchy that laid the foundation for anthropocentrism). That is, if patriarchy and anthropocentrism are different manifestations of a more overarching hierarchical dualism then the replacement of that overarching dualism with, say, an ecocentric philosophical perspective would necessarily remove the conceptual foundations for both the domination of women and the domination of the nonhuman world. (Recall that the cultural feminist response to this hierarchy was to discover how women might climb up the hierarchy of being and join the "male rung.") This is indeed a promising philosophical insight that provides a useful conceptual handle on the relationship between the domination of women and nature. It helps, for example, to explain why patriarchy and anthropocentrism can be mutually reinforcing when they do occur together - without assigning any necessary temporal or causal priority to one or the other. It remains, of course, an empirical question as to how, and to what extent, hierarchical dualism is expressed through the social structures and ecological practices of different societies in different historical epochs. For example, in those societies in which such a perspective is dominant, the degree of actual environmental destruction will, other things being equal, be a function of a society's technological capability.

Yet many ecofeminists might argue that the hierarchical dualism argument is itself question begging since we are still left wondering why it is that men seem to be more prone to adopting such a view of the world than women. If we assume that this is the case simply for the sake of argument, how might this be explained? One simple and obvious explanation might be that it suits men. That is, such a hierarchy of being (i.e., God, Man, Woman, rest of Nature) is self-serving in that it provides a legitimation for the greater social status and power held by men vis-a-vis women.

Many radical ecofeminists, however, have offered a more complex, more psychologically probing, and more contentious explanation that addresses what is seen as a male predisposition toward perceiving the world in hierarchical/dualistic terms.

(iv) The Psycho-Sexual Explanation

According to the psycho-sexual explanation, men are more likely than women to perceive the world in hierarchical/dualistic terms because of their different psycho-sexual development. This development is seen as resulting in men tending to feel more separate from, and women tending to feel more connected to, the world around them. This argument also provides an alternative (psycho-sexual) explanation for the link between patriarchy and anthropocentrism. It maintains that there is indeed something about the separate reality of women that makes them less likely to perceive other humans and the nonhuman world as Other but that this is attributed to their early psychological development rather than to their oppression.

The theoretical underpinnings for the psycho-sexual explanation put forward by some radical ecofeminists to account for the respective "hard" and "soft" boundaries of the "masculine" and "feminine" sense of self is the theory of object relations - that branch of psychoanalytic theory concerned with the development of the self in relation to others.[73] Isaac Balbus, who has developed this theory at length, has argued that mother-monopolized child-rearing serves to structure male consciousness in such a way that men fail to perceive either women or nature as subjects.[74] The argument runs as follows. The young infant's painful discovery of self-identity, and hence separateness from the world, differs between the girl child and the boy child in mother-monopolized child-rearing societies. The boy child must not only undergo the painful loss of dependence on the love object, the mother, (as do

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73. See Dorothy Dinnerstein, The Mermaid and the Minotaur: Sexual Arrangements and Human Malaise (New York: Harper and Row, 1977) and Nancy Chodorow, The Reproduction of Mothering (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978).

74. Balbus, "A Neo-Hegelian, Feminist, Psychoanalytic Perspective on Ecology," and Balbus, Marxism and Domination. See also Gray, Green Paradise Lost, especially Part I.

girls) but also define his gender in opposition to that which is both experienced and defined as feminine, his mother - who becomes the "Other." Whereas both girl and boy infants experience some hostility toward their mother for being the person who shatters their illusion of omnipotence, the resentment is more intense in boys since they must go through a twofold dis-identification in discovering their self and gender. As Balbus puts it:

> When the initial-love object and authority figure of the infant is a woman, the unconscious resentment that inevitably accompanies the terrible necessity of separating from the being with whom one has been, and with whom one wishes to forever remain, symbiotically related is necessarily transferred to all those who represent this being, i.e., to women in general, who become in the process the scapegoats for the inescapable pain of the human condition.[75]

The result is that boys are more likely to experience themselves as separate from others whereas girls are more likely to define themselves in relation to others, i.e., as subject-subject rather than subject-object. Moreover, since there are no boundaries in the infant's first contact with the mother and since the mother is the primordial background/source of the infant's being, she is identified with nature (note that this step in the argument is asserted, not argued). It is not just Mother but Mother Nature that becomes the repository for the male's unconscious attitude of resentment. That is, mother-monopolized child-rearing engenders male contempt of the female and nature, so that men must struggle against both to attain their masculine selfhood.[76]

According to Balbus, object psychology enables us to see that the rape of nature "is no mere metaphor, but actually and accurately captures the unconscious, incestuous psychological underpinnings of the contemporary exploitation of the eco-system."[77] The solution to this problem - shared parenting - will mean that the mother will no longer be the exclusive, earliest "Other" and the infant will develop a more diffuse gender differentiation, relating to the world as subject-subject. Balbus employs his theory to explain, among other things, why women are disproportionately

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75. Balbus, "A Neo-Hegelian, Feminist, Psychoanalytic Perspective on Ecology," p. 146.

76. Ibid., p. 148.

77. Ibid., p. 147.

active in the ecology and peace movements and why this support is more likely to come from feminist women, and to predict that male support for these movements is likely to grow as child-rearing practices are transformed from mother-monopolized to shared parenting.

It would provide too much of a digression to deal exhaustively with the many criticisms that have been levelled against the kind of psychological explanation provided by Balbus. It will suffice merely to list these major criticisms before moving on to discuss what I take to be the most salient of these criticisms for present purposes. The major criticisms that are usually directed against the kind of psycho-sexual explanation provided by Balbus may be summarized as follows. First, Balbus falsely universalizes childhood experience, usually to the Western middle class norm, ignoring differences in class, race, culture, and historical epoch. Second, his theory assumes that our characters are fixed in our formative years and pays little attention to the fact that we can undergo important psychological development throughout our post-infant lives. Third, Balbus's particular account is pervaded with "an inflationary estimation of maternal power" insofar as it fails to consider the role of the father figure in the identity formation of both the boy and girl child (not all object relations theorists, however, overlook the father figure in this way).[78] Fourth, the theory is ultimately speculative. There are no clear criteria of confirmation, insofar as there is a range of other equally plausible psychological narratives that could conceivably account for gender development and the formation of the feminine and masculine psyche.

However, the major problem with Balbus's thesis is that he offers only a one-way analysis that focuses on how child-rearing determines culture, thereby overlooking the extent to which culture and social structure can condition child-rearing. Balbus thus attempts to reduce patriarchy to psychology, ignoring the reciprocal interplay between social structure, the division of labour, and employment opportunities. As Adler observes, whereas Marx fetishizes the mode of production,

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78. See Keller, Reflections on Gender and Science, p. 111, footnote 16.

Balbus fetishizes the mode of child-rearing and regards everything else as epiphenomenal.[79]

The last point is particularly important to the present discussion. Rosemary Radford Ruether's broad overview of the way in which industrialization has helped to shape the formation of gender provides an important corrective to the tendency in many ecofeminist to overrate the importance of the psycho-sexual origins of patriarchy and anthropocentrism and underrate the importance of the material (i.e., socio-economic) factors that influence gender formation. Ruether points out how, as male work became increasingly dissociated from the home and collectivized under the factory system, the home was transformed from being the main sphere of production "to a consumer unit in society, totally dependent upon a separate work structure no longer under its control."[80] Women became increasingly confined to the sphere of reproduction - private, isolated child-rearing and housekeeping havens that freed men to enter into the public, productive, civil sphere. (And here, advertisers have been quick to exploit women's role as both chief buyer and chief sexual image.) This split in bourgeois society between private and public morality, the former emotional and particular, the latter rational and universal, helped to structure the experience of men and women, thereby helping both to shape and reinforce the different moral universes of men and women. According to Ruether, the cultivation of an ecological sense of self that affirms others in a state of reciprocal interdependence demands changes not only in the nuclear family structure (here, she envisages shared parenting in the context of a kibbutz-type community that would enable the communalization of child-rearing, cooking, and housework) but also a thoroughgoing "democratization of decision-making over technological development and equalization of its benefits."[81] In short, Ruether argues that the women's and

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79. Frank Adler, "Reply to Balbus," Telos 52 (1982): 156-58.

80. Ruether, New Woman New Earth, p. 197.

81. Ibid., p. 205.

ecology movements must unite to reshape basic socio-economic relations and the underlying values of society.[82]

While the theory of object relations may be seen as offering some interesting (though speculative) insights into the process of gender formation in mother monopolized child-rearing societies, its explanation of the link between patriarchy and anthropocentrism is quite tenuous. That is, even if we assume that Balbus's theory stands as an adequate explanation for sexism, it does not satisfactorily account for anthropocentrism or "repressive technology" because it fails to explain why the young male's hostility toward the mother is also projected on to the nonhuman world. This crucial linkage between women and nature is merely asserted by saying that the mother is the primordial background and source of the infant's being (and somehow presumably "like nature").

Now Balbus might reply that the link is provided by the different male and female "modes of symbolization" that result from mother monopolized child-rearing, which give rise to different ways of relating to others (i.e., subject-object [domineering], subject-subject [reciprocal]) and that this is also transferred to the nonhuman world. However, he does not spell out the mechanism of this transference. Evelyn Fox Keller, who draws on a more sophisticated variant of object relations theory that includes the father figure, has sought to address this linkage more specifically through the prism of science. According to Keller, it is not that men simply transfer their contempt of, and distance from, women to the nonhuman world (as Balbus seems to suggest), but rather that men's overly demarcated sense of self distorts their practice of science and the way they relate to their subject matter, namely, nature. That is, Keller employs object relations theory not in order to challenge science per se but rather to challenge the "masculine bias" of scientists and thereby direct attention to the psyches of those who practice science.[83] (Keller uses

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82. Ibid., p. 204. Note that Ruether, unlike Dodson Gray, cautions women against accepting the role of romantic, nurturing earth mother (p. 203).

83. Keller's general acceptance of the objectivity of science (once it is rid of "masculine bias") has drawn criticism from other feminist theorists who dispute such objectivity and emphasise instead the social construction of science. See, for

the notion of "masculine bias" to encompass such ideas of self-detachment or distance from the "object" studied and the quest for mastery).

Like Balbus, Keller draws on the theory of object relations in support of the idea that men tend to have an excessively defined and women an inadequately defined sense of self, suggesting that

> ... one possible outcome of these processes is that boys may be more inclined towards excessive and girls toward inadequate delineation: growing into men who have difficulty loving and women who retreat from science.[84]

However, Keller is somewhat critical of object relations theory in its "preoccupation with autonomy as a developmental goal and its corresponding neglect of connectedness to others."[85] That is, it assumes that autonomy can only be achieved by sacrificing one's sense of interrelatedness. Keller argues that human autonomy needs to be reconceived as a dynamic process that is no longer threatened by connectedness to others and which focuses on the reciprocal interplay between self and other. Keller concludes that such a conception of dynamic autonomy would facilitate a parallel conception of dynamic objectivity in science and in our relationship to nature.

According to Keller's argument, the vantage point of women vis-a-vis science is special not because it is feminine per se, but simply because it is less constrained by a masculine identity.[86] (In this respect, Keller departs from radical ecofeminists such as Salleh and King, who herald the feminine as the alternative human ideal.) Keller's main concern is to unearth what she sees as part of the (male)

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example, Ann Dugdale, "Keller's Degendered Science," Thesis Eleven 21 (1988): 117-28.

84. Keller, Reflections on Gender and Science, p. 89.

85. Ibid., p. 72.

86. See Keller, "Women, Science, and Popular Mythology," p. 142, and Keller, Reflections on Gender and Science. Keller argues that the Nobel prize winner Barbara McClintock provides a good example of a woman scientist who was not constrained by a masculine identity and who practiced "dynamic objectivity." According to Keller, McClintock did not have a specific gender commitment, but she did have "deviant" values and methodological style, that is, a "feeling for the organism" and a recognition of and attentiveness to the uniqueness of individual organisms - traits that are often found in the naturalist tradition. See Evelyn Fox Keller, A Feeling for the Organism: The Life and Work of Barbara McClintock (New York: Freeman, 1983).

emotional substructure of science so that we may rescue science and "preserve the things that science has taught us, in order to be more objective."[87] Her account clearly goes much further than Balbus's in seeking to explain how the "masculine" hostility toward the "feminine" is projected onto the nonhuman world through the practice of science. Moreover, rather than embrace the feminine as the alternative mode of relating to others, Keller defends a developmental norm of "dynamic autonomy" that seeks to transcend the limitations of both the masculine and feminine models of self and other. This is a commendable norm irrespective of whether one accepts the other theoretical claims put forward by Keller. Nonetheless, her explanation for men's contempt for woman and nonhuman nature still rests on the reductionist and highly speculative account of gender development provided by object relations theory.

In any event, the case against mother-monopolized child-rearing - which seeks to explain the male association of, and contempt for, women and nonhuman nature - is contradicted by other ecofeminist explanations of patriarchy and anthropocentrism. As Carolyn Merchant has shown, the identification of female with nature has not always been negative. Prior to the Scientific Revolution the prevailing image of nature was not that of a wild, fearsome women that needed to be subdued and controlled. Rather, the earth was seen as a nurturing and bountiful mother - an image that tended to invoke respect and protective care. Merchant's thesis counts against the theory of object relations in that there is nothing to suggest that mothers were not the primary child-rearers before the 16th and 17th centuries when the organismic, earth mother metaphor prevailed.[88] According to Merchant, the real

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87. Keller, "Women, Science, and Popular Mythology," p. 178.

88. Merchant, The Death of Nature. Balbus notes this point but seeks to explain the more symbiotic relationship with nature characteristic of "primitive" societies with mother-monopolized child-rearing on the basis that the child enjoys a longer nurturing period - and hence a stronger primary identification - with the mother, the symbolization of nature. However, for the male child the separation from the mother comes much later in the form of harsh initiation rites, which gives rise to intense hostility to the mother, but not the natural world (see Balbus, "A Neo-Hegelian, Feminist, Psychoanalytic Perspective on Ecology," pp. 149-50). This explanation is, however, highly speculative and reductionist.

trouble began with the rise and eventual triumph of a mechanistic world-view that inaugurated a detached, omnipresent self that could manipulate nature to "expand human empire." (Those pressing the critique of hierarchical dualism would trace the philosophical antecedents of this mechanistic world-view to ancient Greece; mind/body dualism did not originate with Descartes but rather can be traced back as far as Plato.[89])

The theory of object relations has not only been used to shore up the patriarchy thesis (i.e., that androcentrism lies at the root of the ecological crisis, that the problem is essentially psycho-sexual in origin) but also to support the associated claim that "the separate reality" and nurturing consciousness of women should provide the basis of an alternative social and environmental ethic. As we have seen, the "feminine" sense of self is considered by radical ecofeminists to be preferable to the "masculine" sense of self on the ground that it gives rise to a personal, reciprocal, emotional, and contextualized "caring ethic" as opposed to an abstract, rights-based ideal of justice.[90] Yet if the theory of object relations tells us anything (and Keller is alive to this point), it is that both the prevailing male and female sense of self is deficient - that the former is excessively delineated whereas the latter is <u>not delineated enough</u>.[91] This would seem to undermine the claim that a new environmental ethic ought to speak in the "different voice" of women, suggesting instead that both the

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89. See, for example, George Sessions, "Anthropocentrism and the Environmental Crisis," <u>Humboldt Journal of Social Relations</u> 2 (1974): 71-81, especially at p. 76.

90. See Jim Cheney, "Ecofeminism and Deep Ecology"; Ariel Salleh, "Deeper than Deep Ecology"; and Marti Kheel, "The Liberation of Nature."

91. Indeed, this latter argument is used by Janet Biehl to argue <u>against</u> women cultivating the wider sense of self defended by deep/transpersonal ecologists on the ground that it is an insult to women! That is, Biehl considers that deep/transpersonal ecologists are asking women to "regress" to the passive, egoless state that they have endured for so long - just when they are learning to become more active, assertive, and creative. Like Murray Bookchin, and unlike most radical ecofeminists, Biehl is suspicious of Goddess worship, Taoism, or other spiritual paths that foster humility on the ground that these practices lead to an obliteration of self. This, however, is clearly a misreading of deep/transpersonal ecology. As the above discussion makes clear, transpersonal ecology seeks the cultivation of an empathic orientation toward all beings, whether male or female, human or nonhuman. It emphasizes an expansive, relational, field-like sense of self in contrast to a narrow, atomistic, particle-like sense of self. This clearly involves <u>a widening and maturing of self rather than a loss of self</u>.

stereotypical masculine and feminine senses of self need to be transcended - not only by shared parenting but also by other kinds of social and cultural change (such as those envisaged by Ruether).

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What, then, can we conclude from the preceding survey of radical ecofeminism? Where has the celebration of the body, nurturance, and femininity led ecofeminism and what theoretical light has been shed on the relationship between patriarchy and the domination of nature? Are ecology and feminism natural allies as ecofeminists claim or is the relationship merely a contingent one?

Ecofeminist scholarship has drawn attention to the conceptual parallels, symbolic resonances, and areas of practical overlap in both the critical and constructive tasks of the radical wings of the ecology movement and the women's movement. It has pointed to a range of philosophical antecedents and historical events that have undoubtedly contributed to our understanding of the dialectical interplay between the domination of women and the domination of nonhuman nature. Hierarchical dualism, the rise of modern science and a mechanistic world-view, the complex process of gender formation, and the changing division of labour under capitalism all clearly have an important bearing on this interrelationship. Yet the above critique makes it clear that the patriarchy thesis has been unable to demonstrate a necessary link between the domination of women and the domination of nature. Indeed, I have sought to show how some avenues of inquiry, for example, Merchant's historical inquiry into the rise of mechanistic materialism, have served to undermine or at least limit the applicability of others, for example, Balbus's and Keller's psycho-sexual explanation. The above survey also makes it clear that while radical ecofeminism has a greater affinity with an ecological perspective than other strands of feminism, it nevertheless provides an inadequate theoretical grounding for a general emancipatory movement for ecological and social reconstruction. This inadequacy arises not simply from the reductionist and speculative nature of the patriarchy thesis

and the psycho-sexual explanation but also from the problems associated with uncritically accepting the "separate reality" of women.

The hierarchical dualism thesis, on the other hand, provides an important contribution to ecocentric emancipatory theory. It does this by conceptually linking together patriarchy and anthropocentrism without asserting any necessary causal or temporal connection. According to this thesis, both patriarchy and anthropocentrism may be seen as particular manifestations of hierarchical dualism - manifestations that are often mutually reinforcing. For example, we saw in Chapter 2 that anthropocentrism is often used to legitimate the domination of people on the ground that certain powerful or privileged groups and classes are deemed to possess particular qualities (e.g., reason) that they claim make them more fully human (and hence less animal-like) than other groups and classes.[92] The hierarchical dualism thesis helps us to see how the success of this kind of legitimation depends on a general acceptance of the differential imperative or, more generally, a concept of the human that is set apart from the rest of the animal world on a hierarchy of being.[93]

It is important to emphasize, however, that this hierarchical dualism thesis only addresses the social/philosophical legitimation given for (as distinct from social causation of) these two forms of domination.[94] In particular, it does not follow from this thesis that the removal of patriarchy will necessarily see an end to the domination of the nonhuman world in practice. Nor will the removal of anthropocentrism necessarily signal the end of patriarchy in practice. In both cases, institutional and technological changes will also be required. However, the transcendence of a hierarchical/dualistic mode of perceiving the world and the cultivation of an ecological sense of self that affirms others (both humans and nonhumans) in a state of reciprocal interdependence will undermine the conceptual apparatus that has

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92. See in particular Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate," and Plumwood, "Women, Humanity and Nature."

93. For a similar point, see Plumwood, "Women, Humanity and Nature," p. 18.

94. This distinction is clearly made by Fox in "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate."

legitimated both anthropocentrism and patriarchy. This reciprocal mode of perceiving the world is precisely the kind of perspective defended by ecocentrism.

In the following section, I intend to show that, paradoxically, attempts to redress the inadequacies of radical ecofeminism through a new "transformative feminism" only serve to reinforce the need for a more general emancipatory theory that incorporates feminist insights in a broader theoretical framework.

Transcending Both Masculine and Feminine: Attaining Human Virtue

Rather than reject or embrace the idea that women are closer to nature than men, many ecocentric and ecofeminist theorists have responded to the ecofeminist problematic by seeking to transcend masculine and feminine stereotypes by arguing for the cultivation of a new kind of person. This does not mean that the new ecological person must be thoroughly androgynous or gender neutral (there is no good reason why both men and women's bodily differences should not be celebrated), only that a person's sex is not considered to have an important bearing on the human qualities that are needed to heal the rift between humans and the rest of nature. As Don E. Marietta has put it:

> We are talking about people who cultivate the best qualities of human beings, regardless of the traditional assignment of those to one sex. These qualities of character and behaviour indicate, I believe, the values supported by feminism.[95]

Similarly, Val Plumwood has argued that what we now need is "an account of the human ideal for both sexes, which accepts the undesirability of the domination of nature associated with masculinity."[96] Such an ideal must flow from a critique of

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95. Don E. Marietta, "Environmentalism, Feminism, and the Future of American Society," The Humanist 44 (1984): 15-18, 30 at p. 18. Other theorists sympathetic with this kind of approach include Warwick Fox, Joan Griscom, Patsy Hallen, Evelyn Fox Keller, Val Plumwood, Alan Wittbecker, Michael Zimmerman (all references cited above). I have already noted that many radical ecofeminists also claim to support this kind of approach (see, for example, King, "Feminism and the Revolt of Nature," p. 14). However, these claims are counteracted by the radical ecofeminist defence of the "separate reality" of women as providing the basis of the future human ideal.

96. Plumwood, "Women, Humanity and Nature," p. 22.

both masculinity and femininity and be linked to a "systematic transcendence of the wider set of dualisms," (e.g., mind/body, reason/emotion, public/private).[97] Moreover, as Plumwood explains, the characteristics that make up this new human ideal might well be associated more with one gender than another. However, these characteristics will still be "degendered in the sense that they won't be selected because of their connection with one gender rather than the other, but on the basis of independent considerations."[98]

Clearly, radical feminism does not provide an appropriate theoretical framework for the cultivation of this kind of ecological citizen. But is there another kind of feminism that is adequate to the task or must we look beyond feminism? According to Karen Warren, socialist feminism (which weds the insights of traditional Marxism with those of radical feminism) might appear to provide the most promising theoretical framework for cultivating the kind of egalitarian society that would nurture this new kind of person.[99] However, Warren acknowledges that socialist feminism (like socialism in general) has traditionally been anthropocentric insofar as its overriding concern is for human autonomy of thought and action. Moreover, while the ecological crisis is a matter of concern to many socialist feminists, it is not usually cast as a specifically feminist issue. Indeed, Warren's survey of four leading versions of feminism (liberal, radical, Marxist, and socialist) has led her to conclude that none provide an adequate grounding for ecofeminism. What is needed, Warren argues, is "an integrative and transformative feminism ... [that] makes a responsible ecological perspective central to feminist theory and practice."[100]

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97. Ibid., p. 23.

98. Ibid.

99. Karen J. Warren, "Feminism and Ecology: Making Connections," Environmental Ethics 9 (1987): 3-20 at p. 17. Rosemary Radford Ruether also comes close to this position.

100. Ibid., pp. 17-18.

What would such a feminism look like? According to Warren, a transformative feminism would (i) become a movement to end all forms of oppression and, accordingly, would seek to make explicit the connections between all forms of domination; (ii) provide a central theoretical place for the diversity of women's experience as an oppressed group, but also support a "politics of difference" by encouraging other oppressed groups to collectively assert their own needs; (iii) reject "the logic of domination and the patriarchal conceptual framework that gives rise to it" (this aspect remains problematic - see below); (iv) seek to cultivate ways of seeing ourselves as co-members of a nonhierarchical yet diverse community that is based on caring, reciprocal relations; (v) recast traditional ethical concerns to make a central place for these values of care, reciprocity, and trust; and (vi) challenge the patriarchal bias in science and technology and redirect these activities so that they are brought into the service of preserving rather than destroying life.[101]

Note that Warren's transformative feminism does not herald the feminine ideal as the social ideal. Moreover, it rejects the idea that women have a privileged eco-wisdom (whether attributable to their nature, nurture, or oppression). What it does seek is the recognition of the diversity of experience of all oppressed groups, women being but one example. Nonetheless Warren's transformative feminism does reiterate the ecofeminist claim that the patriarchal framework provides the conceptual basis for other kinds of domination. This claim, however, is explicitly assumed rather than examined by Warren. That is, her intention is not to defend ecofeminism but merely to assess the adequacy of four leading versions of feminism to discover which, if any, can provide a theoretical grounding for ecofeminism (on the assumption that "ecofeminism is true or at least plausible").[102] Our previous discussion has made it clear, however, that the patriarchy thesis is untenable and that the relationship between the domination of women and the domination of the nonhuman world is better understood as a mutually reinforcing dialectic. A revised transformative

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101. Warren, "Feminism and Ecology," pp. 18-20.

102. Ibid., p. 5.

feminism must therefore be concerned to trace this dialectic while also recognizing that there are other social perspectives and practices that reinforce other kinds of domination that do not have a necessary bearing on the sex/gender system (e.g., anthropocentrism, racism, and the domination of one class by another).

Warren's final point concerning the patriarchal biases in science warrants a more extended discussion since it might appear to revive the radical ecofeminist claim that women are able to bring a superior (as distinct from simply a different) perspective to bear (whether "feminine" or "feminist") on our understanding and practice of science. Yet Warren's rejection of the idea that women's reproductive capabilities are essential to women's nature makes it clear that it is not women's biology but rather women's different (and undervalued) social experience that gives them a vantage point of "critical otherness" from which to examine male-dominated science (recall that we called this "the oppression argument"). Moreover, the problems associated with the radical feminist project of privileging the voice of oppressed women and inverting the dominant social valuation of the masculine vis-a-vis the feminine do not apply here since Warren's transformative feminism is seeking to transcend these very categories. Indeed, the argument concerning "critical otherness" is accepted by Warren as having equal force in respect of <u>other</u> marginalized or oppressed groups who have traditionally been underrepresented in science (this includes <u>male</u> scientists who do not conform to the "masculine ideal").

Warren does not attempt to develop this point since her concern is merely to signpost how a transformative feminism <u>might</u> approach the question of science and technology. However, Evelyn Fox Keller's notion of a degendered science (discussed in the previous section) would seem to be consistent with transformative feminism, Keller's reliance on object relations theory notwithstanding. This is because Keller's vision is of a gender-free science that is premised on the <u>transformation</u> of the categories of male and female, mind and nature. Rather than substituting a one-sided masculine ideal with an equally one-sided feminine ideal, Keller is concerned with

> ... the reclamation, from within science, of science as a human (i.e., gender free) instead of a masculine project, and the renunciation of the division of emotional and intellectual labour that maintains science as a male preserve.[103]

Keller sees hierarchical dualisms such as male/female, reason/emotion, and transcendent/immanent as powerful mythologies that cannot be regarded as either true or false - "rather, by their very nature they bear a degree of contingent truth."[104] These mythologies have not only ensured that many more scientists are men (via a self-selection process) but also influenced the very definition of science, resulting in a distorted conception of scientific objectivity, that is, that science is a subjectless form of knowledge. Quoting Piaget, Keller describes this kind of objectivity as an "anthropocentric illusion ... ignoring the existence of self and thence regarding one's own perspective as immediately objective and absolute."[105] However, Keller (unlike most radical ecofeminists) argues that there is nothing wrong with the quest for objectivity when it is recognized and approached as a process and search for

> ... a characterization of our experience which transcends local, parochial vantage points, which transcends the expression of particular needs and fears, and which accordingly supports consensual agreement. As such, objectivity can be understood as a quintessentially human goal, even if it is a goal that can be never quite achieved.[106]

What is needed, then, is not "the introduction of a specifically female culture into science" but rather the adoption of a new developmental norm based on the actualization of "dynamic autonomy." Such a norm would recognize a degree of

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103. Keller, Reflections on Gender and Science, p. 178. Patsy Hallen, on the other hand, has argued that Keller's vision is exactly that sought by ecofeminism. Hallen writes: "Keller notes that McClintock is not a feminist scientist, since McClintock's vision was of a science not based on sex or gender. But here Keller misses the point: feminism wishes just that. Feminism seeks to transcend the dividing dichotomies between masculine and feminine and to found a new science on McClintock's vision" (see Hallen, "Making Peace with Nature: Why Ecology Needs Feminism," The Trumpeter 4 [1987]: 3-14 at p. 7). Hallen is arguing that the very transcendence of hierarchical dualism is to be found in the eco-feminist vision or way of being in the world, which is a process oriented, "I-thou" relation rather than a relation of detachment and domination that is characteristic of "malestream" science. In this way, science can be reclaimed as a human rather than a masculine project (ibid., p. 4.) My quibble with Hallen concerns her choice of labels, not the substance of her argument.

104. Keller, "Women, Science, and Popular Mythology," p. 133.

105. Ibid., pp. 134-35. The quote is from Jean Piaget, Child's Conception of the World (Totowa, N. J.; Littlefield, Adams, 1972), p. 34.

106. Keller, "Women, Science, and Popular Mythology," p. 134.

active, personal responsibility in the context of "soft boundaries" between self and other.[107] Indeed, Keller accepts that it is not enough simply to instigate new patterns of parenting (where the nurturance and care of children is shared by mother and father). We must also examine our beliefs about science by challenging its apparent neutrality and exposing its limitations and "masculine" pretensions.

However, it is not only "masculine" biases that can "distort" the practice of science. Anthropocentric prejudices, which may be grounded, say, in certain religious beliefs or philosophical frameworks (which may persist notwithstanding the institution of shared parenting), can be equally problematic, as I have argued at length in Chapter 5 in my critique of Habermas's understanding of the scientific project. If a transformative feminism is to make a "responsible ecological perspective central to feminist theory and practice" (to quote Warren) then its critique of science must also deal with these and other kinds of prejudices as well.

Conclusion

Ecofeminist theory has considerably enriched our appreciation of the complex interrelationships between the domination of women and the domination of the nonhuman world. Nonetheless, I have argued that radical ecofeminist theorists have not demonstrated a necessary link between patriarchy and anthropocentrism in a way that can justify the argument that patriarchy is the source (whether conceptual or historical) of the ecological crisis. The hierarchical dualism thesis, on the other hand, provides a "higher order" explanation that addresses the common kind of social/philosophical legitimation given for anthropocentrism and patriarchy in a way that does not claim any temporal or causal connection between the two phenomena. Moreover, in this chapter I have pointed to many problems and inconsistencies within radical ecofeminism - problems that other sympathetic theorists have sought to overcome in a revised, transformative feminism. The question remains, however, whether this transformative feminism, which builds on the important ecofeminist

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107. Ibid., p. 143.

critique of hierarchical dualism, can now stand as an adequate ecocentric emancipatory theory.

If we further revise transformative feminism to remove Warren's assumption (in point [iii] of her outline of transformative feminism) that the patriarchy thesis is defensible, then we arrive at an interesting paradox concerning the status of ecofeminist theory. That is, we have seen that there are serious conceptual and practical problems associated with certain radical ecofeminist claims; however, to the extent that these problems are addressed through a revised, ecologically oriented, transformative feminism then the resulting body of theory loses its uniquely feminist character and becomes instead a general ecocentric emancipatory theory. In other words, if the special experiences and critical perspectives of all oppressed groups are treated as prima facie valid and fed into the general emancipatory theoretical project, there seems to be nothing left in the theoretical endeavour to warrant it being described as a specifically feminist one.[108]

In any event, an ecocentric perspective serves as a more appropriate overarching theoretical matrix for emancipation writ large because it seeks to accommodate inter-human emancipatory struggles within a broader, ecological framework. That is, it starts with the "big picture" concerning our relationship to other life-forms and then proceeds from the general to the particular by locating specific social struggles within a larger ecological matrix. In this way it provides the means for establishing the outer ecological limits within which the different needs of human emancipatory movements can be addressed and harmonized in order to ensure that the interests of the nonhuman world are not continually sacrificed in the name of human emancipation. The emancipatory concerns of new social movements - including the women's movement - may thus be seen as nesting within an ecocentric

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108. In responding to ecofeminist critiques of deep or transpersonal ecology's preoccupation with anthropocentrism, Fox asks the pointed question: why don't ecofeminists also criticize deep ecologists for being neutral with regard to class, race, etc., rather than just gender? Two reasons might be: (i) to do so would detract from the ecofeminist preoccupation with patriarchy, and (ii) to do so would leave ecofeminism vulnerable to the same criticism (see Fox, "The Deep Ecology-Ecofeminism Debate and its Parallels," p. 14).

framework. To be sure, the revised transformative feminism outlined above has arrived at a similar position from the opposite direction by working progressively from the particular to the general to the point where it has become virtually indistinguishable from an ecocentric perspective. However, the "outside-in" approach of ecocentrism (particularly that of transpersonal ecology) is preferable to the "inside-out" approach of ecofeminism in that the former is more likely to promote an inclusive sense of self through its emphasis on cosmologically based identification rather than just personally based identification. Moreover, as I argued above, such a general theory warrants a more general label that does not privilege the concerns of any particular human emancipatory movement.

Conclusion

One of the main objectives of this inquiry has been to expose the deeply ingrained anthropocentric assumptions in modern political thought and to show how they have contributed to the ecological crisis we now face. Moreover, we have seen that these anthropocentric assumptions have been used to legitimate different kinds of social and political domination, such as patriarchy, imperialism, and racism. Indeed, the argument that anthropocentrism is implicated in different forms of human domination should be enough to alert the staunchest of human-centred political theorists to the need for a greater dialogue with environmental philosophy. This inquiry has hopefully been a step in that direction.

A more specific objective of this inquiry has been to articulate and develop an ecocentric Green political theory in the course of an examination of the major currents of Green political thought. The parameters of this inquiry were laid down in Part I, where I distinguished Green political theory from the other main ecopolitical approaches that have emerged since the 1960s, namely, the participatory approach and the survivalist approach. I showed that Green political theory may be characterized by its concern to reconcile the ecopolitical themes of democratic participation and survival through the more encompassing theme of emancipation. I then divided Green or emancipatory ecopolitical theory into an anthropocentric stream and an ecocentric stream and argued that the latter provided the most promising and encompassing framework for the resolution of social and ecological problems. Having characterized Green or emancipatory ecopolitical theory, I identified those modern political traditions that warranted examination in terms of their actual or potential compatibility with emancipatory ecopolitical goals, namely, neo-Marxism, democratic socialism, anarchism, and feminism.

In Part II, I provided a detailed examination of the ecologically oriented revisions of these post-liberal, egalitarian, and communitarian traditions. The

ecologically informed versions of these traditions were identified as humanist eco-Marxism (including Critical Theory), democratic ecosocialism, ecoanarchism, and ecofeminism. (Orthodox eco-Marxism was included in this examination as a foil or point of departure for, rather than as an example of, emancipatory ecopolitical theory.) The principal purpose of this examination was to establish which of these approaches were most compatible with the ecocentric perspective defended in Chapter 2, and to outline, where appropriate, how each approach might be further developed in an ecocentric direction.

What, then, are the major findings of Part II? I showed that ecoanarchism and ecofeminism are the most ecocentric of the various emancipatory ecopolitical theories examined, whereas the three families of ecosocialism all clearly belong to the anthropocentric stream of emancipatory ecopolitical thought. Notwithstanding this finding, I argued that the anti-statist political framework defended by ecoanarchists (and implicitly supported, although not addressed, by ecofeminists) was neither the only nor the most appropriate means for the realization of ecocentric emancipatory goals in the context of the modern world. I argued that a fundamentally revised version of democratic ecosocialism, that is, a democratic ecosocialism that rested on ecocentric rather than anthropocentric foundations, provided the most comprehensive political framework for emancipation writ large.

In the case of the three families of ecosocialism, I showed that the degree of anthropocentrism tended to diminish as we moved from orthodox eco-Marxism to humanist eco-Marxism (including Critical Theory) and then to democratic ecosocialism, which I described as largely post-Marxist. Moreover, I argued that although the two families of eco-Marxism could not be divested of their anthropocentric assumptions without seriously distorting the theoretical categories of Marxism and Neo-Marxism on which they are based, this did not apply to democratic ecosocialism. I argued that democratic ecosocialism had the potential to be revised in an ecocentric direction simply by extending its theoretical horizons, that is, by extending its fundamental norm of respect for all persons to encompass respect for all life-forms and ecological entities. This would bring about the necessary shift in the

democratic ecosocialist response to wilderness and human population issues while incorporating other democratic ecosocialist goals such as the "new internationalism," production for human need, and economic and social democracy.

On the matter of political forms, I argued that the decision making structures defended by democratic ecosocialists provide an important counterpoint to the anti-statist decision making structures defended by ecoanarchists. Indeed, there is considerable irony in one of the major conclusions of this inquiry: that the political forms defended by democratic ecosocialists - who are anthropocentric (albeit in a passive rather than active way) - are better able to realize ecocentric emancipatory goals than those defended by ecoanarchists - who are largely ecocentric. In particular, I argued that there are sound ecocentric reasons for not ceding absolute political power to small, local communities. However, I argued that there is certainly a need to break down the excessive concentration of political and economic power in the nation state, large corporations, and bureaucracies - a feat that can be best carried out by a democratic national parliament.

In the case of ecoanarchism, I showed that the two tributaries of ecocommunal thought - ecomonasticism and bioregionalism - were more ecocentric than the social ecology of Murray Bookchin. Nonetheless, I concluded that an ecocentric perspective was not adequately reflected in the political forms recommended by ecoanarchism. This is because the case for local sovereignty provides no institutional recognition of the many different layers of social and ecological community that cohere beyond the level of the local community. I also argued that the ecoanarchist case for ceding sovereignty to local communities rests on a somewhat naive and over-optimistic model of human nature. In particular, I pointed out that "small" is not "beautiful" when the rule of the nation state is replaced with the rule of the local community in circumstances where that local community is impoverished and its local ecosystem is poorly endowed or denuded, or where the local community chooses, or is forced by economic necessity to adopt, a development path that undermines the local ecosystem.

More generally, I argued that we face a highly unstable future and that we cannot afford to relinquish the institutional gains of parliamentary democracy and the (however imperfect) checks and balances they provide against the abuse of power - at least not until such time as an ecocentric consciousness has fully permeated our political culture. Instead, we should be concerned to revitalize these institutional gains by strengthening such checks and balances and then using the forum of parliament to democratize society at large by breaking down excessive concentrations of political and economic power. This includes breaking down the sovereignty of the nation state and dispersing appropriate areas of its political power both "up" (i.e., to interregional and international democratic decision making bodies) and "down" (i.e., to local decision making bodies such as municipal governments). A multi-levelled political decision making structure of this kind is more theoretically compatible with an ecocentric perspective than the kind of local sovereignty defended by ecoanarchism in that the former provides a far greater institutional recognition of the different levels of social and ecological community in the world. Such a multi-levelled decision making structure is also better able to implement ecocentric emancipatory goals. In particular, it is better able to secure the international, inter-regional, and inter-community agreement that is essential to dealing with the ecological crisis and better able to maintain basic standards of income, health, education, and welfare between communities, regions, and nations.

Notwithstanding my criticisms of ecoanarchist political forms, I consider that ecoanarchism has made, and will continue to make, a vital contribution to the development of an appropriate ecocentric emancipatory culture - a culture that is infused with a sense of connectedness both between humans and between humans and the nonhuman world, a democratic ethos, and a sense of personal, civic, and ecological responsibility. Indeed, it must be emphasized that many of the ecoanarchist theories examined in Chapter 7 do not even address, or address in only a cursory way, the question of political forms at a general societal level. In particular, most defenders of ecomonasticism and many bioregional theorists are less concerned with bringing about general economic and political structural change (at least in the

first instance) and more concerned to facilitate cultural renewal by establishing exemplary ecological communities within the "shell" of existing society. By encouraging people to exercise existing political and economic freedoms and engage in small scale, local experiments of this kind, these ecoanarchists are concerned to develop peaceful ways of facilitating what Roszak has called the "creative disintegration" of industrial society.

The ecofeminist contribution to Green political theory is one that focuses on the relationship between the domination of women and the domination of the nonhuman world rather than on the question of the particular political institutions that might foster a socially and ecologically responsible society. However, I pointed out that the strong anti-hierarchical orientation of ecofeminism suggests that it would have considerable sympathy with ecoanarchist political forms.

The special theoretical focus of ecofeminism has generated some valuable new insights. In particular, ecofeminists (as well as some ecocentric theorists) have pointed to the similar ideology of domination that underlies anthropocentrism and patriarchy. Just as anthropocentrism rests on a concept of the human that is set apart from the rest of the animal world, patriarchy rests on a concept of the human that is based on "masculine" qualities that are deemed to be even more fully human, and therefore of a less animal-like nature, than feminine qualities. In other words, patriarchy rests on a hierarchy of being that not only posits humans above the rest of nature but also posits men above women. We saw how this mode of legitimizing the domination of women also underlies other forms of human domination such as racism and imperialism. The emancipation of women, other oppressed groups, and the nonhuman world requires that this self-serving hierarchy of being be rejected in favour of a non-hierarchical perspective that celebrates the diversity of human and nonhuman beings.

Notwithstanding these important contributions, there were many shortcomings in the various theoretical explanations provided by radical ecofeminists to account for the association between patriarchy and anthropocentrism. In particular, we found that ecofeminism has not been able to demonstrate that there is a <u>necessary</u>

link between these two forms of domination, as some theorists have claimed or implied. The removal of patriarchy will not necessarily see an end to the domination of the nonhuman world. As ecocentric theorists point out, it is not difficult to envisage a society in which social egalitarianism is achieved at the expense of the nonhuman world (as we saw in Chapter 4, orthodox socialism aspired to precisely this kind of society).

Our examination of ecofeminism also identified a number of problems associated with the claims that women, by virtue of their oppression and/or reproductive functions, are more ecologically attuned than men and that the different psychological characteristics of women ought to provide the basis for the development of a new environmental ethic. I concluded that women do have a special vantage point from which to critically evaluate existing ecological problems and develop an alternative ecological ethic, but that the perspective of women should not be uncritically accepted nor theoretically privileged vis-a-vis the perspectives of other oppressed groups.

Whereas radical ecofeminism embraces the association of women with nature and celebrates a specifically "feminine" sensibility as the most appropriate sensibility for an ecological society, I outlined an alternative "transformative feminism" that seeks to transcend the dichotomies of "masculine" and "feminine" through the cultivation of a new kind of person. This approach includes a critique of traditional notions of both masculinity and femininity and seeks the cultivation of an ecological sense of self that affirms others (both humans and nonhumans) in a state of reciprocal interdependence. I concluded that this approach is thoroughly compatible with an ecocentric perspective. I suggested further that it was more accurate and appropriate to describe this general theory as an ecocentric emancipatory theory rather than as "transformative feminism" since it does not seek to privilege, a priori, the experience or concerns of women vis-a-vis the experience or concerns of other oppressed groups.

* * *

Having drawn together my major findings I would like, in the closing pages of this inquiry, to offer some further observations on the dialogue between democratic ecosocialism and ecoanarchism concerning strategy, institutional design, and the role of the state given that this dialogue has emerged as the sharpest political counterpoint within emancipatory ecopolitical thought. As a preface to these observations, it is important to acknowledge that this particular dialogue is a very familiar political dialogue that is not unique to Green political circles. As I explained in Chapter 1, the principal newness or distinctiveness of Green political thought (and this applies more to the ecocentric than the anthropocentric stream) is not to be found primarily in the particular political forms or strategies suggested by Green theorists. Rather, it lies primarily in the different ecophilosophical perspective that is brought to bear upon contemporary social and ecological problems, the different and more encompassing kind of critique that is applied to existing social, political, and economic institutions, and the different and more encompassing ethical and political justifications provided for the various (and more or less familiar) decision making arrangements and strategies that are proposed. I can now illustrate what I mean by this, using the example of bioregionalism, which is arguably the most politically innovative approach to emancipatory ecopolitics. While the idea that political decision making units should conform to ecological criteria such as watersheds is quite novel, the actual political forms proposed by bioregional theorists - a patchwork of self-governing communities loosely linked together in a bioregional confederation - have long been advocated by anarchist theorists. The distinctiveness of bioregionalism, however, lies in the primary, ecological justification given for adopting these forms, namely, that they will facilitate a greater awareness of, and sense of co-habitation with, the local ecosystem and the myriad nonhuman life-forms that inhabit it and thereby facilitate the bioregional practice of "reinhabitation." It should be clear by now that my challenge to bioregionalism in this inquiry has to do with whether bioregional political forms are the most appropriate means for the realization of bioregional goals rather than with the bioregional goals themselves, which ecocentric theorists would generally endorse.

The dialogue between democratic ecosocialism and ecoanarchism concerning strategy, institutional design, and the role of the state not only provides the sharpest political counterpoint within emancipatory ecopolitical theory but also provides a major counterpoint within Green movement circles. It is currently being played out in day-to-day Green politics between the pragmatist and the fundamentalist wings of the Green movement, that is, between those who want to take the electoral route and gain political power and those who want to bring about change at the grassroots level and thereby avoid being corrupted by what is seen as the "power politics" of hierarchical institutions. I must hasten to add here that while all ecoanarchists are fundamentalists, not all democratic ecosocialists are pragmatists; however, it is a fair generalization to say that democratic ecosocialists incline toward a more pragmatic strategy in that they are concerned to bring about systemic changes, which, in turn, require the capture of state power through the ballot box.

Although I have defended the institution of parliament against the ecoanarchist critique, I have emphasized that ecoanarchism nonetheless has a vital and continuing role to play in the further development of an ecocentric emancipatory political culture. As Alex Comfort has observed, anarchism must be seen more as an attitude than as a programme:

> Anarchists do not plan revolutions - but when they become numerous ... [they] constitute active, unbiddable and exemplary lumps in the general porridge of society. If numerous enough, they begin to affect the types of choices which societies make.[1]

Moreover, I consider that further refinements in ecocentric Green political theory will emerge out of the continuing dialogue between ecoanarchists and democratic ecosocialists. As we have seen, the prime concern of most ecoanarchists is with "right action" and authenticity rather than with political expediency or the conquest of power. The political goal is generally one of inducing or inviting change through education and exemplary action, leading to the withering of support for hierarchical institutions. If this proves ultimately to be ineffectual, then so be it, since

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1. Alex Comfort, "Preface" in Harold Barclay, People Without Government (London: Kahn & Averill with Cienfuegos Press, 1982), p. 8.

ecoanarchists - consistent with their high ideals of individual and community autonomy and personal responsibility - seek to avoid deciding a way of life for others.

Democratic ecosocialists, however, are critical of ecoanarchism for being "voluntarist," utopian, and ultimately marginal and ineffectual. Democratic ecosocialists are concerned with the practical negation of the economic and political domination that arises under capitalism and totalitarianism and, to this end, are concerned to develop a theoretical understanding of society that will generate a successful politics of transition on a far-reaching scale. In this respect, democratic ecosocialists argue that it is not enough simply to encourage people to engage in voluntary, exemplary action by means of an appeal to the common good - as if everyone has an equal interest in social and ecological reform. Rather, they argue that ecoanarchism must recognize and address the fact that certain classes have a material interest in maintaining the status quo. Democratic ecosocialists also argue that it is utopian and idealistic to encourage only voluntary action and "small experiments" and not address systemic problems. In particular, they argue that it is naive to by-pass the state in the expectation that it will wither away without a struggle by the simple transfer of allegiances. Finally, they argue that ecoanarchists either ignore or do not adequately address questions such as uniform civil rights, basic welfare and redistributive justice, revenue raising, intergovernmental co-operation, and international representation.

I have already endorsed and further developed many aspects of the democratic ecosocialist critique of ecoanarchism and need not repeat these points again. What I do want to reiterate, however, is that my critique should not be taken as a rejection of the contribution of utopian thinking in Green political thought. In an illuminating discussion on utopianism, Ruth Levitas distinguishes between utopianism as form (i.e., the Blueprint) and utopianism as function (i.e., venturing beyond the given, releasing the imaginative faculties, and providing a heuristic of future possibilities): "The point then becomes not whether one agrees or disagrees with the institutional arrangement, but rather that the utopian experiment disrupts the

taken-for-granted nature of the present."[2] Ecoanarchism (particularly ecomonasticism and bioregionalism), along with the new genre of "ecotopian" literature by anarchist and feminist writers, provides an invaluable service to emancipatory ecopolitical discourse by stimulating our imaginative faculties and providing what E. P. Thompson has called "the education of desire" - an education that "opens the way to aspiration."[3] To dismiss this educative function of utopianism is to deny a major impulse to progressive political engagement and severely limit the means by which we may examine what passes for "common sense."

Nonetheless, the Green movement will ultimately stand or fall on its ability to generate practical alternatives to the advanced industrial way of life. As democratic ecosocialists such as E. P. Thompson and Raymond Williams have rightly argued, it is important to connect utopian aspirations with analysis and human experience rather than allow them to settle as a mere mental compensation for, or a means of escape from, the shortcomings of the status quo. Without this kind of connection, such aspirations will remain in the realm of what Ernst Bloch has called an "abstract utopia" as distinct from a "concrete utopia."[4] To be realized, the aspirations released by utopianism must be dialectically related to one's knowledge of the present thereby uniting desire with analysis, and leading to informed cultural, social, and political engagement. The ecocentric Green movement needs idealists and pragmatists, creativity and critical analysis, grassroots activity and institutional support if it is to achieve its long term aims.

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2. Ruth Levitas, "Marxism, Romanticism and Utopia: Ernst Bloch and William Morris," Radical Philosophy (Spring 1989): 27-36 at p. 33.

3. E. P. Thompson, William Morris: Romantic to Revolutionary (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976), p. 791. For a stimulating discussion of ecotopian literature, see George Sessions, "Ecophilosophy, Utopias, and Education," Journal of Environmental Education 15 (1983): 27-42.

4. See Ernst Bloch, The Principle of Hope, trans. N. Plaice, S. Plaice, and Paul Knight (London: Basil Blackwell, 1986). For a discussion of Bloch's ideas, see Levitas, "Marxism, Romanticism and Utopia."

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